

BHARATI PANCHARATNA SERIES No. 3

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KANNAN PAATTU

72
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KRISHNANJALI Part One

TAMIL TEXT AND METRICAL
TRANSLATION IN ENGLISH

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Sekkizhaar Adi-Podi

T. N. RAMACHANDRAN

Price Rs. 8/-

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KRISHNANJALI

Part One

An English Rendering of Mahakavi Bharati's

KANNAN PAATTU

WITH TRANSLATION, NOTES AND INDEX

By

Sekkizhaar Adi-Podi

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மகா கவி பாரதியார் அருளிய
கண்ணன் பாட்டு

பாகம் — 1

KRISHNANJALI

PART ONE

(1)

கண்ணன் — என் தோழன்.

- (1) பொன்னவிர் மேனிச் சுபந்திரை மாதைப்
புறங்கொண்டு போவதற்கே — இனி
என்ன வழியென்று கேட்கி லுபாயம்
இருகணத் தேயுரைப்பான் ; — “அந்தக்
கண்ணன் வில்லாளர் தலைவனைக் கொன்றிடக்
காணும் வழியொன் றில்லேன் — வந்திங்
குன்னை யடைந்தனன்” என்னி லுபாயம்
ஒருகணத் தேயுரைப்பான்.
- (2) கானகத் தேசுற்று நாளிலு நெஞ்சிற்
கலக்கமி லாதுசெய்வான் ; — பெருஞ்
சேனைத் தலைநின்று போர் செய்யும் போதினில்
தேர்நடத் திக்கொடுப்பான் ; — என்றன்
ஊனை வருத்திடு நோய் வரும் போதினில்
உற்ற மருந்து சொல்வான் ; — நெஞ்சம்
ஈனக் கவலைக ளெய்திடும் போதில்
இதஞ் சொல்லி மாற்றிடுவான்.
- (3) பிழைக்கும் வழிசொல்ல வேண்டுமென் றுலொரு
பேச்சினிலே சொல்லுவான் ;
உழைக்கும் வழிவினை யாளும் வழிபயன்
உண்ணும் வழியுரைப்பான் ;
அழைக்கும் பொழுதினில் போக்குச் சொல்லாமல்
அரைநொடிக் குள்வருவான் ;
மழைக்குக் குடைபசி நேரத் துணவென்றன்
வாழ்வினுக் கெங்கள் கண்ணன்.
- (4) கேட்டபொழுதிற் பொருள் கொடுப்பான் ; சொல்லுங்
கேலி பொறுத்திடுவான் ; — என
ஆட்டங்கள் காட்டியும் பாட்டுக்கள் பாடியும்
ஆறுதல் செய்திடுவான் ; — என்றன்
நாட்டத்திற் கொண்ட குறிப்பினை யிஃதென்று
நான் சொல்லு முன்னுணர்வான் ; — அன்பர்
கூட்டத்தி லேயிந்தக் கண்ணனைப் போலன்பு
கொண்டவர் வேறுளரோ ?

(1)

KANNAN — MY FRIEND

“Your friend is your needs answered ” *Gibran*

- “ Pray bless me with a subtle ruse to ' lope
With Subhadra, the dame of shining gold ”
Thus when him I beseech, in moments twain
He devises it ; “ I know not the way to kill
(5) Karna, the valiant chief of bow - men great ;
Pray, show me the way ; thou art my refuge ”
When thus I press my suit and him implore,
Behold in a trice the way is cleared.
- When roaming exiled in the pathless wood
(10) He would me free from utter 'wilderment ;
When I lead the army great and wage a war
He my charioteer would deign to be ;
When malady doth my frame mortify
He would the right remedy fain prescribe ;
(15) When my heart by sorrows base are assailed
He would med'cine it with solacing words.
- “What's the way to survive sure ? ” if I ask
He would that unfold in one little word ;
The way to work, the way to rule the work
(20) Th' way to enjoy its fruit, he would declare ;
When him I call, in a mere split - second
He comes without fail and no excuse pleads ;
For rain a parasol, for hunger food,
For my life He, our beloved Kannan.
- (25) He gives at once when money I ask for ;
My fleeing gibes he bears with loving grace ;
Liquid lays would be lilt and even dance
To secure for me composure of mind ;
He would sense even ere him I apprise
(30) The very sign of my deep - laid desire ;
Is there amongst, the teeming millions
A soul so wedded to Love as Kannan's ?

- (5) உள்ளத்தி லேகரு வங்கொண்ட போதினில்
ஒங்கி யடித்திடுவான் ; — நெஞ்சில்
கள்ளத்தைக் கொண்டொரு வார்த்தை சொன்னாலங்கு
காறி யுமிழ்ந்திடுவான் ; — சிறு
பள்ளத் திலேநெடு நாளமுகுங் கெட்ட
பாசியை யெற்றிவிடும் — பெரு
வெள்ளத்தைப் போலருள் வார்த்தைகள் சொல்லி
மெலிவு தவிர்த்திடுவான்.
- (6) சின்னக் குழந்தைகள் போல் வினையாடிச்
சிரித்துக் களித்திடுவான் ; — நல்ல
வன்ன மகளிர் வசப்படவே பல
மாயங்கள் சூழ்ந்திடுவான் ; — அவன்
சொன்ன படிநட வாவிடி லோமிகத்
தொல்லை யிழைத்திடுவான் ; — கண்ணன்
தன்னை யிழந்துவிடில், ஐயகோ ! பின்
சகத்தினில் வாழ்வதிலேன்.
- (7) கோபத்தி லேயொரு சொல்லிற் சிரித்துக்
குலுங்கிடச் செய்திடுவான் ; — மனஸ்
தாபத்தி லேயொன்று செய்து மகிழ்ச்சி
தளிர்த்திடச் செய்திடுவான் ; — பெரும்
ஆபத்தினில் வந்து பக்கத்தி லேநின்
றதனை விலக்கிடுவான் ; — சுடர்த்
தீபத்தி லேவிழும் பூச்சிகள் போல் வருந்
தீமைகள் கொன்றிடுவான்.
- (8) உண்மை தவறி நடப்பவர் தம்மை
உதைத்து நசுக்கிடுவான் ; — அருள்
வண்மையி னாலவன் மாத்திரம் பொய்கள்
மலைமலை யாவுரைப்பான் ; — நல்ல
பெண்மைக் குணமுடையான் ; — சில நேரத்திற்
பித்தர் குணமுடையான் ; — மிகத்
தண்மைக் குணமுடையான் ; — சில நேரம்
தழலின் குண முடையான்.

- If ever in heart pride doth 'gin to wax
 Instantaneous would be his smiting ;
- (35) If utter we a word by false heart bred
 Lo, we 're his contemptible cuspidor.
 His words of grace benign are like a flood
 That washes clean the stagnating waters
 Of their long-festering moss odious ;
- (40) Thus does he wash us of our weaknesses.
 Like little children he would frisk and sport
 And even laugh full well in jocund glee ;
 To be the cynosure of lovely dames
 He has his bag o' tricks and thingumajigs ;
- (45) If e'er we act to his will contrary
 Lo, we are in for trouble serious.
 Were I, alas, to lose beloved Kannan
 Would I still, aye, live on this earth unblest ?
- When wroth we are he would utter a word
- (50) That would our sides in running laughter split ;
 When mind estranged is sore distressed, he would
 Do a thing and the spring of joy restore ;
 In danger great, stand he would by our side
 And aye avert it sure, I know not how.
- (55) Invading evils would by him be quelled
 As insects by the burning lamp are killed.
- Woe to them that swerve from the path of truth ;
 He would kick them black and blue and crush them ;
 But yet would he utter by his strength o' grace
- (60) A myriad lies huge as Olympus ;
 He hath the nature that's womanly good
 Tho' sometimes he behaves as one insane ;
 All in all he is cool and serene, though
 At times he like the flame would rage and scorch.

- (9) கொல்லுங் கொலைக்கஞ் சிடாத மறவர்
குணமிகத் தானுடையான் ; — கண்ணன்
சொல்லு மொழிகள் குழந்தைகள் போலொரு
சூதறி யாது சொல்வான் ; — என்றும்
நல்லவ ருக்கொரு தீங்கு நண்ணாது
நயமுறக் காத்திடுவான் ; — கண்ணன்
அல்லவ ருக்கு விடத்தினில் நோயில்
அழலினிலுங் கொடியான்.
- (10) காதல் வினைய மயக்கிடும் பாட்டினில்
கண்மகிழ் சித்திரத்தில் — பகை
மோதும் படைத் தொழில் யாவினுமே திற
முற்றிய பண்டிதன்காண் ; — உயர்
வேத முணர்ந்த முனிவ ருணர் வினில்
மேவு பரம் பொருள் காண் : — நல்ல
கீதை யுரைத்தெனை மின்புறச் செய்தவன்
கீர்த்திகள் வாழ்த்திடுவேன்.

Introductory Remarks

The friendship that subsists between Bharati and Kannan is that of Nara-Naaraayana's. Bharati is Nara i e. Arjuna ; Kannan!Naaraayana i e. Vishnu. Arjuna is the fidus Achates of Kannan.

But ' Friendship is equality ' as stated by Pythagorus. A friend is one with whom you dare to be yourself. He is an " alter ego ", " another I ".

St. Sundarar was " Tampiraan's Thozhar " (Friend of the Lord). Thiagaraja the supreme, disguised himself as an old Brahmin and walked the streets of Thiruvavoor not once, but twice during a single night, to effect a rapprochement between St. Sundarar and his sulking wife Paravai Naacchiaar. " Is ' bouderie ' any concern of the Lord ? " thought the serious-minded devotee Eaerkon Kalikkaamar and his acerbity for St. Sundarar and Lord Thiagaraja alike, knew no bounds.

- (65) Fearless is his nature as that of Maravas
 Who are by fell murder vile undaunted ;
 Innocent are his words as of children's
 That are spoken, aye, without guile or wile ;
 The vanguard great is he to the goodly
- (70) And doth them protect from evil's onslaught ;
 But fiercer is Kannan unto the base
 Than venom, malady mortal or fire.
- In charming roundelays that love bewitch
 In artistic paintings that eyes bewitch
- (75) In the art of warfare and in all arts,
 Behold, he is a pundit consummate !
 He is the embosomed deity supreme
 Of the master-seers of Vedic Wisdom ;
 Unto me the Gita great he expounded ;
- (80) O the joy ! Let me his praise ever hail.

If even so great a devotee as St. Eaerkon Kalikkaamar cannot comprehend the mysterious way of the Lord, can we the unenlightened even hope to comprehend the game the Lord chooses to play ? Therefore do we admonish in the words of the Christ and say " Judge not ".

A word about Kannan's role in the elopement of Subhadra.

Any desire of man, by God fulfilled, is legitimate, This is the core of every religion. The ways of Providence are mysterious. Man's duty is to know them to be mysterious. There the duty ends. Let not man try to unravel the mystery. " God has made thee to love Him, and not understand (comprehend) Him " says Voltaire.

We petty mortals live in a world of logic and ratiocination. The realm of Lord is beyond these. " And they did not understand the saying which He spoke to them ". (Luke 2 : 50). Says St. Umapathy :

“ Chanted Vedaa, Naada and Naadaanta,
These as much as they could, with their own light
Sought after ; still th’ saving Light infinite
Glows as the immeasurable Beyond ”. (Porrip
Pahrodai). We once again quote St. Umapathy.

“ He who is for e’er easy of access
(To th’ godly) is past both speech and logic. ”
(Nenju Vidu Thoothu).

So we say at the risk of repetition “ Judge not ”.

Notes

Line 2. Subhadra : She who is of auspicious prosperity. The following is an extract from John Dowson’s Dictionary : “ **Su—Bhadra.** Daughter of Vasu-deva ; sister of Krishna ; and wife of Arjuna. Bala-rama her elder brother, wished to give her to Dur-yodhana, but Arjuna carried her off from Dwaraka at Krishnan’s suggestion, and Bala-rama subsequently acquiesced in this union. She was mother of Abhimanyu ... ”.

Lines 3 and 8 : in moments twain ... in a trice ... : Kannan takes two seconds to come out with a plan of elopement ; but in one second is revealed his way to annihilate an enemy. Why ?

In the first case Arjuna demands ; in the second, he prays.

Lines 9 and 10 : When roaming ... ‘ wilderment.

Cf. “ Best friend, my well-spring in the wilderness ”
— George Eliot.

Lines 11 to 18 : When I ... one little word ;

Cf. (1) “ A true friend unbosoms freely, advises justly, assists readily, adventures boldly, takes all patiently, defends courageously, and continues a friend unchangeably. ”

— William Penn.

Cf. “ A faithful friend is the medicine of life. ”

— *Apocrypha, Ecclesiasticus, vi, 16.*

- (3) " The best elixir is a friend. "

— *William Somerville.*

- (4) But oh, if grief thy steps attend
If want, if sickness be thy lot
And thou require a soothing friend
Forget me not, forget me not.

— *Amelia Opie.*

- (5) " in doubt
My oracles "

— *Pollock.*

Lines 19 and 20 : The way to work ... would declare ;

Herein are expounded the three of the four purushaarthas,
viz., righteousness, wealth and pleasure.

Lines 21-22 : When him ... no excuse pleads :

Cf. " When a friend asks there is no to-morrow. "

— *George Herbert.*

Lines 23-24 : For rain ... Kannan :

Cf. " When He moves, he is His parasol ;
when he sits, he is His throne ; when He
stands he is His sandals ; in the sea
he is His float ; His gem of light,
His silken habilment as well as
His quilt and maltress. Thus serves
the serpent (Adi-sesha) the Lord. "

— *Poikai Aazhwaar.*

Line 24 : He gives ... for :

See notes for lines 21-22.

Line 25 : My fleeing ... grace :

A true friend never gets offended.

Cf. " A friend should bear his friend's infirmities. "

— *Julius Caesar, 4,3, 86,*

Lines 29-30 : He would ... desire :

Thiruvalluvar has written a whole chapter on this. He says :
 " Look upon that man as a God who divineth with certitude
 that which is in the heart. "

— Kural 702.

Lines 33-34 : If ever ... smiting :

Pride is the father of perdition. Lucifer the Archangel
 became Satan the devil, because of his pride. Kannan the
 Saviour cannot brook this sin in silence. His correction is
 instantaneous.

Lines 35-36 : If utter ... cuspidor :

The road to Hell is cobbled with falsehoods
 Kannan is there to take men on the godly way.
 Cuspidor = a spittoon.

Lines 37-40 : His words ... weaknesses :

Man's character is made-up of impressions acquired by
 him in many incarnations. Some of these are vile and vicious.
 They attach to man like lampreys to rocks. Kannan is the
 advent of grace which washes clean man of his acquired
 impressions. It is like unto a flood which carries away in its
 sweep all the filth and moss of a petty pond. A room may lie
 locked, with all its windows barred, for several years. Utter
 darkness may reign supreme there. But the moment the door
 is opened and light is allowed to flood in, all darkness will in a
 trice total disappear.

Line 41 : Like little children ... sport :

Cf. "Allow the little ones and do not stop them from
 coming to Me, for of this kind the kingdom of
 Heaven is composed"
 — Matthew 19, 15.

Lines 43-44. To be ... thingumajigs :

Cf. "The endearing elegance of female friendship"
 — *Rasselas*, Chap. 46. Dr. Johnson.

Lines 45-46: If e'er ... serious :

Cf. "Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world and all our woe"
— *Paradise Lost*, Book 1, Lines 1-3.

Lines 47-48: Were I, unblest? :

Cf. Homototies moritur quoties amittit suos
(A man dies as often as he loses his friends)
— *Bacon*.

Lines 49-52: When wroth joy restore :

A true friend halves our misery and doubles our joy.
Cf. "A father is a treasure; a brother is a comfort;
a friend is both." — *Benjamin Franklin*.

Lines 53-56: In danger .. killed.

A true friend is a saviour of life, says a Tamil proverb.
Kannan can quell evils without any overt act. The flame
in the lamp does not go after insects. It is the insects
which fly there to get killed.

Lines 57-60: Woe to them ... Olympus ;

Lies are an abomination unto the Lord.

Bharati says : "When we lie we are punished; when
Kannan lies it is grace " How can this be true. The reader
will do well to read again the introductory remarks. If Kannan
appears to indulge in falsehood, it is grace and nothing but
grace. Let us not ask "How can this be true? " Indeed,
nothing is truer than this. When the soldier kills, it is valour ;
it is patriotism. When you kill, it is murder.

Line 61: He hath ... good :

Kannan is a Mother unto all.

Line 62: Tho' sometimes ... insane;

The ways of the Lord are unpredictable.

They baffle reason and reasoning too.

Lines 63-64: All in all ... rage and scorch.

The loving Father is also a stern martinet.

Lines 65-66; Fearless ... undaunte'd;

The Lord is the expounder of the Gita and the Upanishads. Vivekananda says "There is no religion of fear in the Upanishads ..." He who is 'Aja' (unborn) is also 'Abhi' (fearless).

Lines 67-68. Innocent ... wile;

See notes for line 41.

Lines 69-72. The vanguard ... or fire.

This is the message of Bhaagavata (IX, 24, 56) which says "Whenever righteousness wanes and unrighteousness increases the Almighty Lord, Hari creates Himself."

Also Cf. "Whenever there is a decline of righteousness and rise of unrighteousness, O Bharata (Arjuna), then I send forth (create, incarnate) Myself." — *The Gita*, IV, 7.

It is thus an equilibrium is maintained

Lines 73-76: In charming ... consummate.

The Lord is a Master of all arts. And all arts are to be dedicated to Him.

Lines 77-78: He is ... Wisdom;

The Lord is within you and without you.

Line 79: the Gita.

"The Bhagavatgita is more a religious classic than a philosophical treatise. It is not an esoteric work designed for and understood by the specially initiated but a popular poem

which helps even those "who wander in the region of the many and variable." It gives utterance to the aspirations of the pilgrims of all sects who seek to tread the inner way to the city of God. We touch reality most deeply, where men struggle, fall and triumph. Millions of Hindus, for centuries, have found comfort in this great book which sets forth in precise and penetrating words the essential principles of a spiritual religion which are not contingent on ill-founded facts, unscientific dogmas or arbitrary fancies."

— *Radhakrishnan.*

J. W. Hauer calls it "a work of imperishable significance."

In the Gita "Spirit is at work that belongs to our spirit."

"The Gita is one of the clearest and most comprehensive summaries of the Perennial Philosophy ever to have been made." *Aldous Huxley.*

Line 80: O the joy, ... hail.

Bharati's praises of the Lord and his work are indeed our Gita.

கண்ணன் — என் தாய்

உண்ணாஉண் ணத்தெவிட்டாதே — அம்மை
உயிரெனும் முலையினில் உணர்வெனும் பால் ;
வண்ணமுற வைத்தெனக்கே — என்றன்
வாயினிற் கொண் டுட்டுமோர் வண்மையுடையாள்,
கண்ணனெனும் பெயருடையாள், — என்னைக்
கட்டிநிறை வான்எனுந்தன் கையிலணைத்து
மண்ணெனுந்தன் மடியில் வைத்தே — பல
மாயமுறுங் கதைசொல்லி மனங்களிப்பாள்.

8

இன்பமெனச் சிலகதைகள் — எனக்
கேற்றமென்றும் வெற்றியென்றும் சில கதைகள்
துன்பமெனச் சிலகதைகள் — கெட்ட
தோல்வியென்றும் வீழ்ச்சியென்றுஞ் சிலகதைகள்
என்பருவம் என்றன்விருப்பம் — எனும்
இவற்றினுக் கிணங்கவென் னுளமறிந்தே
அன்பொடவள் சொல்லிவருவாள் ; — அதில்
அற்புதமுண் டாய்ப்பர வசமடைவேன்.

16

விந்தைவிந்தை யாகவெனக்கே — பல
விதவிதத் தோற்றங்கள் காட்டுவிப்பாள் ;
சந்திரனென் றெருபொம்மை — அதில்
தண்ணமுதம் போலஒளி பரந்தொழுகும் ;
மந்தை மந்தை யாமேகம் — பல
வன்னமுறும் பொம்மையது மழைபொழியும் ;
முந்தஒரு குரியனுண்டு — அதன்
முகத்தொளி கூறுவதற்கொர் மொழியிலையே.

24

வானத்து மீன்க ளுண்டு — சிறு
மணிகளைப் போல்மின்னி நிறைந்திருக்கும் ;
நானத்தைக் கணக்கிடவே — மன
நாடிமிக முயல்கினுங் கூடுவதில்லை ;
கானத்து மலைகளுண்டு — எந்தக்
காலமுமொ ரிடம்விட்டு நகர்வதில்லை.
மோனத்திலே யிருக்கும் — ஒரு
மொழியுரை யாதுவினை யாடவருங்காண்.

32

(2)

KANNAN - MY MOTHER ✓

*"The Force, it is of the Orinigal Being Supreme
To adore It as Mother spells good."*

Bharati.

- Life is th' breast of Mother the milk of which
'S Consciousness, for e' vr sweet sans satiety ;
She keeps it divine, the Mother mighty
To suckle me aye, her tender infant ;
Kannan is her name ; with her hands that are
Heaven itself, she in loving embrace
Doth rest little me on her lap, the earth
(8) And tells enchanting tales in delight great.
Some tales on Pleasance turn and some are meant
For my upliftment and triumph ; some are
With misery gravid ; to dire defeat
And down-fall, some relate ; lo, with my age
And desire too, commensurate, full well
The core of my heart construing
She would in love tales narrate hearing which
(16) Enthrilled would I be, by wonder possessed.
Reveals she to me forms kaleidoscopic,
Innumerable are these, the wonders ;
There is a lovely doll called Cynthia,
It is with cool ambrosial light suffused ;
Full many a herd are they, the nimbi ,
The dark-tinted dolls that with rain deluge
And there is th' hoary sun ! What tongue is there
(24) To 'scribe the glory of its face divine ?
There are stars that stud the galaxy great,
They like gems of rare lustre do glister great.
Would that I could count them all ; but behold
My mind that tries, doth tire and fail alas !
Many are the mountains in forests huge,
Immobile are they, to earth riveted
Deep and firm in ever-during silence ;
(32) Gamesome are they too in a wordless way.

நல்ல நல்ல நதிகளுண்டு — அவை
நாடெங்கு மோடிவினை யாடிவருங்காண் ;
மெல்லமெல்லப் போயவைதாம் — விழும்
விரிகடற் பொம்மையது மிகப்பெரிதாம் ;
எல்லையதிற் காணுவதில்லை ; — அலை
எற்றிநுரை கக்கியொரு பாட்டிசைக்கும் ;
ஒல்லெனும்ப் பாட்டினிலே — அம்மை
ஓமெனும் பெயரென்றும் ஒலித்திடுங்காண்.

சோலைகள் காவினங்கள் — அங்கு
சூழ்தரும் பலநிற மணிமலர்கள்
சாலவு மினியனவாய் — அங்கு
தருக்களில் தூங்கிடும் கனிவகைகள்
ஞாலமுற் நிலுநிறைந்தே—மிக
நயந்தரு பொம்மைக ளெனக்கெனவே
கோலமுஞ் சுவையுமுற — அவள்
கோடிபல் கோடிகள் குவித்துவைத்தாள் ;

தின்றிடப் பண்டங்களும் — செவி
தெவிட்டறக் கேட்கநற் பாட்டுகளும் ;
ஒன்றுறப் பழகுதற்கே — அறி
வுடையமெய்த் தோழரு மவள்கொடுத்தாள் ;
கொன்றிடு மெனஇனிதாய் — இன்பக்
கொடுநெருப் பாய்அனற் சுவையமுதாய்,
நன்றியல் காதலுக்கே — இந்த
நாரியர் தமையெனைச் சூழவைத்தாள்.

இறகுடைப் பறவைகளும் — நிலந்
திரிந்திடும் விலங்குகள் ஊர்வனகள்
அறைகடல் நிறைந்திடவே — எண்ணில்
அமைத்திடற் கரியபல் வகைப்படவே
சுறவுகள் மீன்வகைகள் — எனத்
தோழர்கள் பலருமிங் கெனக்களித்தாள் ;
நிறைவுற இன்பம்வைத்தாள் ; — அதை
நினைக்கவு முழுதிலும்சூடுதில்லை.

Good many a river are there ; they run
 And wind in playful fun throughout th' land ;
 By and by, these at last into the sea merge
 Which is a doll so vast and great in size ;
 Unkown are its bounds, and its billows huge
 Do break in foam and froth, humming a song ;
 What may it be that in that song resounds ?

(48) Om it is th' name of our Mother sacred.

Groves and gardens are there galore and lo,
 The flowers of Iris hues like gems do bloom ;
 Ambrosial fruits of vegetable gold
 Surpassing sweet deck the stately trees ;
 These over earth entire are spread, and sure
 They are all my toys and dolls goodliest ;
 The Mother hath raised billions of these

(48) So colourful and so delicious too.

Dainty dishes for th' palate, goodly songs
 That sate not the eager listening ear
 And friends sole blest with knowledge to get oned
 In friendship — all these are her gifts divine.
 Murderously sweet, as fire raw, pleasant
 And flame - delicious as nectar is Love.
 To be imparadised in such love great

(56) She hath me surrounded by damozels.

The feathered race that scale the heaven
 The beasts that on earth roam, and the reptiles,
 The sharks and th' finny drove of several kinds
 That do thrive and teem in the ocean - stream
 —Hard to tell, as they the number defy—
 All these my friends are, by Mother secured.
 Unto me hath she given bliss brimful ;

(64) Even thought is pow'rless these to measure.

சாத்திரங் கோடிவைத்தாள் ; — அவை
தம்மினு முயர்ந்ததொர் ஞானம்வைத்தாள் ;
மீத்திடும் பொழுதினிலே — நான்
வேடிக்கை யுறக்கண்டு நகைப்பதற்கே
கோத்தபொய் வேதங்களும் — மதக்
கொலைகளும் அரசர்தம் கூத்துக்களும்
மூத்தவர் பொய்ந்நடையும் — இன
மூடர்தம் கவலை யு மவன்புனைந்தாள் ;

வேண்டிய கொடுத்திடுவாள் ; — அவை
விரும்புமுன் கொடுத்திட விரைந்திடுவாள் ;
ஆண்டருள் புரிந்திடுவாள் ; — அண்ணன்
அருச்சுனன் போலெனையாக்கிடுவாள் ;
யாண்டுமெக் காலத்திலும் — அவன்
இன்னருள் பாடுநற் றொழில்புரிவேன் ;
நீண்டதோர் புகழ்வாழ்வும் — பிற
நிகரறு பெருமையு மவன்கொடுப்பாள்.

Introductory Remarks :

Napolean Bonaparte said " The future destiny of the child is always the work of the mother." Emerson advocated this theory when he said " Men are what their mothers made them." J. Q. Adams confessed : "All that I am mother made me".

If all the blessings of the Lord-God can be packed into one single word, it will spell 'Mother'. A Jewish adage says : "God could not be everywhere and therefore He made mothers". Mother indeed is God embodied.

Bharati lost his mother when he was hardly five years old. He could not even remember distinctly the face of his mother. However his step-mother was a real mother to him. In this respect he was singularly fortunate.

A myriad laws of canon she caused;
 And above them all Wisdom did she place;
 When vacancy were to invade my hours
 To get entertained and aye, laugh in glee
 She gave me stuff to muse over, such as
 Pseudo - scriptures, murders vile of crusades
 Wanton gambols of kings, base conduct false
 (72) Of elders and juvenile worries o' fools.

Give she would whatever is sought, and these
 Would she hasten to give, aye, ere desired !
 She is the Saviour of grace immense;
 A brave Arjuna would she make of me;
 In all climes and at all times, it shall be
 Th' joy of my Muse to hymn her grace divine.
 With long life married to immortal fame
 (80) And greatness past compare, she would me bless.

Kuvalai Krishnamachari, the great chela of Bharati secured for Bharati the friendship and blessing of one Govinda Swamy, immortalised in the fragmentary verse autobiography of Bharati. He it was who performed for Bharati a miracle. The Swamy could sound the very depths of Bharati's inner heart which craved for a sight of his mother. Cowper burst into verse when he received a picture of his mother. When GovindaSwamy a SiddhaPurusha, stood before Bharati and vanished only to re-emerge in the form of Bharati's mother, Bharati felt that he was before the very presence of the Almighty Goddess. Who could essay to describe the feelings of Bharati at that hour? None, not even Bharati. Bharati beheld his mother in his Guru GovindaSwamy. Govinda is also Kannan. Says Bharati " ' Mukti is through Love' said the Buddha of old. This day the truth thereof was demonstrated to me by GovindaSwamy. He is the Mother unto all lives. He is a Yogi, par excellence, of immense love. For true love, he can devour the whole sea. 'Only Love is God'

says he and he is Love itself. All lives on earth are unto him godly. He stands free of worries, the accursed miasmata. This Seer, came one day to my house to sanctify it with his golden feet. He revealed to me the form of my dead father. Then he assumed the form of her who gave me to this world. I felt it in my blood that he was a great Yogi and a Seer of realised illumination. I took refuge in this kingiy Guru. Fear of death is no more for me. I am strength."

For other details touching this incident, the reader should consult the classical work of Sri R. A. Padmanaabhan, entitled "Bharathi Puthaial III".

In this poem the Mother is Kannan. He is the Universal Mother. This Mother is worshipped as Sakthi by Bharati. Bharati, be it known is a Sakta, and a staunch one at that.

No religion can thrive that does not embody in itself the Mother-element. The masculine Jehovah worship has yielded itself to Mariolatry. Even Milton the rugged, conceived God as both masculine and feminine. Commenting on Milton's words "Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss And madest it pregnant" Alastair Fowler says "Not a mixed metaphor, but a deliberate allusion to the Hermetic doctrine that God is both masculine and feminine."

So it is, that God is Ammai-Appar, (Father-Mother). For Bharati, He is more Ammai than Appar.

Notes

Lines 1-2: Life is Consciousness :

There are three terms in Tamil which have special significances in the fields of philosophy, theology and metaphysics. They are Arivu (அறிவு), Ariyaamai (அறியாமை) and Arivu Ariyaamai Atra Arivu (அறிவு அறியாமை அற்ற அறிவு). Arivu means imperfect consciousness; Ariyaamai is absence of consciousness and Arivu-Ariyaamai Atra Arivu is perfect consciousness, also known as Unarvu (உணர்வு). The breast of the Mother is a perennial spring of perfect consciousness. This alone knows no satiety. It is for ever sweet. This is also known as 'The Milk of Wisdom' (ஞானப்பால்). The drinker thereof becomes a ThirugnanaSambhandar,

Lines 5-6 : ... with her...Heaven itself...

Cf. "...Heaven is My throne but the earth a footstool
for My feet..." The Acts 8-49.

Line 8 : And tells..... great :

Cf. "Such wondrous tales as childhood loves to hear"
Southey.

Line 9-16 : Some tales...possessed :

Cf. " You may have tangible wealth untold
Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold
Richer than I you can never be -
I had a mother who read to me."
Strickland Gillian, The Reading Mother.

Tales have played a vital role in the lives of the great.
Vishnu-Sarman's tales of Panchatantra were meant for the
edification of princes. Somadeva's stories are legion. Every
national epic is a repertoire of great tales.

Lines 17-28. Reveals she.. alas !

Beauty is writ large in all things created by God.

Only when the world is too much with us, little do we
see in nature. Billions and billions are the joys of Nature,
says Bharati elsewhere.

Lines 29-32 : Many...way :

Cf. (1) "The Delectable Mountains" *John Bunyon.*

(2) "In the wild pomp of mountain majesty"
— *Byron.*

(3) " To me
High mountains are a feeling..." *Byron.*

(4) " mother hills" *Bliss Carman.*

(5) " O dread and silent Mount ! I gazed upon
thee" *Coleridge.*

Lines 33-34 : Good many...land.

Cf. " A mountain and a river are good neighbours."
George Herbert.

Lines 35-37: By and by...huge.

Cf. "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full"
— *Ecclesiastes*, 1,7.

Line 39: What may...resounds ?

Cf. "The loud - resounding sea." *Homer*.

Lines 41-48: Groves...delicious too :

Cf. "A heaven on earth, for blissful Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in the east
Of Eden planted.....
..... in this pleasant soil
His far more pleasant garden God ordained ;
Out of the fertile ground he caused to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste"

Paradise Lost, IV, 208.

Line 49: Dainty dishes...palate :

There is much meaning in the saying of Fanny Fern viz,
"The way to a man's heart is through his stomach."

The Tamil epic *Manimekalai* says : "The giver of food
is the giver of life." Pope says it is substantial happiness
to eat.'

Cf. "They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy"

Paradise Lost, V. 637, (Ed. 1674).

Lines 49-50: ...goodly songs That sate not.....ear.

Music is part of life. As Browning says :

"There is no truer truth obtainable
By Man than comes of music."

Lines 51 - 52 : And friends ... In friendship :

Some take the words of the original to mean "such true
friends who are wise to mingle with". The emphasis is
on 'oneness' and on knowledge solely bent upon this
oneness. The following is the translation by Bharati
himself : "and companions gifted like me, with minds to
play with and *become one with*". As Gibran says,
friendship is a sweet responsibility and never an
opportunity.

Lines 53 - 56: Murderously damozels:

The words of the original defy translation. We give below the translation of Bharati himself.

"and these fair girls, enkindling love, that passion of flaming delight like fiery nectar, killing - sweet."

Your translator is afraid that he is out - Heroding Herod.

The passage in the original is an outburst, at once exquisite and electric. It highlights a subtle truth. In love are juxtaposed things contrary As Shakespeare says, it is "a madness most discreet, A choking gall and a preserving sweet."

Cf. (1) "But of all pains, the greatest pain
It is to love" *Abraham Cowley.*

(2) "The sweetest joy, the wildest woe is love." *Bailey.*

(3) "What a recreation is to be in love! It sets the heart aching so delicately, there's no taking a wink of sleep for the pleasure of the pain."
George Colman the Younger.

(4) "Love has a thousand ways to please,
But more to rob us of our ease." *Dryden.*

(5) "Pains of love be sweeter far
Than all other pleasures are." *Dryden.*

(6) "Love's of itself too sweet; the best of all
Is when love's honey has a dash of gall."
Robert Herrick.

(7) "There is no pleasure like the pain
Of being loved and loving." *W. M. Praed.*

(8) "Jocundus dolor est Si dolor amor est.
(That pain is pleasure if pain be love)
A medieval Latin proverb quoted by
Saintsbury.

- (9) "Love's very pain is sweet."

Shelley, Epipsychidion, Line 596.

- (10) "For even as love crowns you so shall he crucify you."

Kahlil Gibran. The Prophet.

- (11) "To know the pain of too much tenderness" *Ibid.*

Lines 57-64 : The feathered race.....measure :

Bharati is an advaiti His philosophy, in his own words is as follows :

"One only is the Supreme Being
And we are his children."

His "we" includes all beings.

"The crow and the sparrow are of our race
The chain of hills and the seas are our gathering ;
Wheresoever the eyes may rove, nought but "we"
Is beheld ; oh it is a feast of joyance to the eyes."

Line 67 : Wisdom :

The Wisdom which is referred to here is the same as Consciousness referred to in line 2. See notes for lines 1 and 2. This Wisdom in Saiva Siddhanta is called "Pathy-Gnaanam" (The Lord's own knowledge). Vedas which come under 'Paasa Gnaanam' are as nothing before this. 'Pasu Gnaanam' is human wisdom. As Socrates says : "Human wisdom is of little or no value." Explaining human wisdom he says, "The wisest of you mortals is the one who like Socrates, recognizes himself as truly of no account in respect of wisdom." (Apology, page 37, The Trial and Death of Socrates, Everyman's Library).

Line 70 : Pseudo-scriptures :

Any book that claims to be an interpretation of Vedas but is only a book which deals with the words and not the

spirit of Vedas is pseudo. More harm than good is done by such a book. Sastras, as Baghawan Sri Ramakrishna says, are a mixture of sand and sugar. Bharati himself says :

“ A good many Sastras I sought after
But lo ! they are with endless doubts replete ”

Line 75 : She is the Saviour of grace immense :

The Mother is “ Arul ” in Saiva Siddhanta.

The fettered soul is released by Her.

The Pathy or the Lord is like unto the sun.

The rays thereof are the Mother. The sun remains where it is. It is the rays which reach us to purify.

Lines 79-80 : With long life.....me bless :

Bharati is not a weeping philosopher. He is a firm believer in the fullness of God-given life. Life in human embodiment, as Appar says, is to be treasured and valued. By this is meant, dedication.

கண்ணன் — என் தந்தை

பூமிக் கெனையனுப்பினான் ; — அந்தப்
புதமண்ட லத்திலென் தம்பிகளுண்டு ;
நேமித்த நெறிப்படியே — இந்த
நெடுவெளி யெங்கணு நித்தமுருண்டே
போமித் தரைகளிலெல்லாம் — மனம்
போலவிருந் தானுபவ ரெங்களினத்தார் ;
சாமி யிவற்றினுக்கெல்லாம் — எங்கள்
தந்தையவன் சரிதைகள் சிறிதுரைப்பேன்.

8

செல்வத்திற்கோர் குறையில்லை ; எந்தை
சேமித்து வைத்தபொன்னுக் களவொன்றில்லை
கல்னியில் மிகச்சிறந்தோன் — அவன்
கவிதையி னினிமையொர் கணக்கில்லை ;
பல்வகை மாண்பினிடையே — கொஞ்சம்
பயித்திய மடிக்கடி தோன்றுவதுண்டு ;
நல்வழி செல்லுபவரை — மனம்
நையும்வரை சோதனைசெய் நடத்தையுண்டு.

16

நாவு துணிகுவதில்லை — உண்மை
நாமத்தை வெளிப்பட உரைப்பதற்கே ;
யாவருந் தெரிந்திடவே — எங்கள்
ஈசனென்றும் கண்ணனென்றும் சொல்லுவதுண்டு ;
மூவகைப் பெயர்புனைந்தே — அவன்
முகமறி யாதவர் சண்டைகள் செய்வார் ;
தேவர் குலத்தவனென்றே — அவன்
செய்தி தெரியாதவர் சிலருரைப்பார்.

24

பிறந்தது மறக்குலத்தில் ; — அவன்
பேதமற வளர்ந்ததும் இடைக்குலத்தில் ;
சிறந்தது பார்ப்பனருள்ளே ; — சில
செட்டிமக்க னோடுமிகப் பழக்கமுண்டு ;
நிறந்தனிற் கருமைகொண்டான் ; — அவன்
நேயமுறக் களிப்பது பொன்னிறப்பெண்கள் ;
துறந்த நடைகளுடையான் ; — உங்கள்
குணியப்பொய்ச் சாத்திரங்கள் கண்டு நகைப்பான்.

32

KANNAN — MY FATHER ✓

"Hallowed be thy name" *The Bible*
 Unto earth, me did he send and behold !
 My brothers are inhabitants of Budha.
 Ordained laws are there and orbs numberless
 To these conform and gyrate ; in these lands
 Are men, and lo, they are of our race ;
 And their reign doth well match their will joyous
 Our Father is the Lord - God of these ;
 So let me a little, him historise.

(8)

Abundant is his wealth that knows no lack,
 Limitless's his acquisition of gold,
 His learning is unsurpassed, and limit
 There is none at all to the sweets -- his songs.
 Multi-faceted is his glory great
 Tho' dementation frequent his acts doth mark.
 Singular in sooth, is his way, I say,
 That tries them sore that tread the righteous way.

(16)

My tongue doth lack courage, aye, to utter
 His true nomen in frankness open
 That all people may of it come to know ;
 "Our Lord" he is called and also Kannan.
 In three - fold division they wrangle sore
 — The men that cannot him identify —
 Some there are who know nought of him at all ;
 "He is of the race of Devas" say these.

(24)

He was born in the clan of heroes ; he grew
 'Mongst cow-herds with sense none of difference ;
 Great did he among the Brahmins become ;
 Familiar is he with some traders ;
 Dark is his complexion ; he doth delight
 In dames who in hue do the gold rival ;
 Free are his ways and open and he laughs
 At your Sastras false and thaumaturgic.

(32)

ஏழைகளைத் தோழமைகொள்வான் ; — செல்வம்
ஏறியார் தமைக்கண்டு சீறிவிழுவான் ;
தாழ்வரு துன்பமதிலும் — நெஞ்சத்
தளர்ச்சி கொள்ளாதவர்க்குச் செல்வமளிப்பான் ;
நாழிகைக்கொர் புத்தியுடையான் ; — ஒரு
நாளிருந்தபடி மற்றொர் நாளினிலில்லை.
பாழிடத்தை நாடி யிருப்பான் ; — பல
பாட்டினிலுங் கதையிலு நேரமழிப்பான்.

40

இன்பத்தை யினிதெனவும் — துன்பம்
இனிதில்லை யென்றுமவன் எண்ணுவதில்லை ;
அன்பு மிகவுமுடையான் ; — தெளிந்
தறிவினில் உயிர்க்குலம் ஏற்றமுறவே
வன்புகள் பலபுரிவான் ; — ஒரு
மந்திரியுண் டெந்தைக்கு விதியென்பவன் ;
முன்பு விதித்தனையே — பின்பு
முறைப்படி யறிந்துண்ண முட்டிவிடுவான்.

48

வேதங்கள் கோத்துவைத்தான் ; — அந்த
வேதங்கள் மனிதர்தம் மொழியிலில்லை ;
வேதங்க ளென்றுபுவியோர் — சொல்லும்
வெறுங்கதைத் திரளிலவ் வேதமில்லை ;
வேதங்க ளென்றவற்றுள்ளே — அவன்
வேதத்திற் சிலசில கலந்ததுண்டு ;
வேதங்க ளன்றியொன்றில்லை — இந்த
மேதினி மாந்தர்சொல்லும் வார்த்தைகளெல்லாம்

56

நாலு குலங்களமைத்தான் ; — அதை
நாசமுறப் புரிந்தனர் மூடமனிதர் ;
சீல மறிவுதருமம் — இவை
சிறந்தவர் குலத்தினிற் சிறந்தவராம் ;
மேலவர் கீழவரென்றே — வெறும்
வேடத்திற் பிறப்பினில் விதிப்பனவாம்
போலிச் சுவடியையெல்லாம் — இன்று
பொசுக்கிவிட் டாலெவர்க்கும் நன்மையுண்டென்பான்

64

Befriend he doth the poor and is enraged
 At the sight of base hoarders wealthy;
 To them o' unflagging hearts, though misery
 Them flattens, riches he doth give abundant.
 His weather - cock moods vary every hour;
 A different man is he on each new morn;
 He seeks and dwells in the Void, and in songs
 (40) And stories he doth his hours lay waste.

Never in his thought doth he hold 'Pleasance
 As pleasant and Misery unpleasant';
 Immense is his love; that clarity may
 The thought of men inform and them uplift,
 Atrocious acts of havoc will he work.
 Called Fate, a minister my Father has;
 What is of yore ordained, timely will he
 (48) Remind and compell men to eat it all.

He did the Vedas compose; these Vedas
 Are not at all of the tongue of men, though.
 The mere anthology of tales is not
 Vedas; though men of world do deem them so.
 He hath in the Vedas truly intermixed
 A thing or two which indeed are Vedas.
 Mark well! the words of truth by worldly men
 (56) Uttered, are in sooth the very Vedas.

Four are the clans he founded. Alas!
 These by the wanton Tom - fools were laid waste;
 Right conduct, wisdom, purity in deed —
 These make men great and their absence, aye, base,
 Wherefore would he say, that good it would spell
 To feed the fire with all books that are false
 Classifying men into great or low
 (64) On the strength of mere birth and appearance.

வயது முதிர்ந்துவிடினும் — எந்தை
வாலிபக் களையென்று மாறுவதில்லை ;
துயரில்லை, முப்புமில்லை, — என்றும்
சோர்வில்லை, நோயொன்று தொடுவதில்லை ;
பயமில்லை, பரிவொன்றில்லை, — எவர்
பக்கமுநின் றெதிர்ப்பக்கம் வாட்டுவதில்லை ;
நயமிகத் தெரிந்தவன்காண் ; — தனி
நடுநின்று விதிச்செயல் கண்டுமகிழ்வான் .

72

துன்பத்தில் நொந்துவருவோர் — தம்மைத்
தூவென் றிகழ்ந்துசொல்லி வன்புகனிவான் ;
அன்பினைக் கைக்கொள்ளென்பான் ; — துன்பம்
அத்தனையு மப்பொழுது தீர்ந்திடுமென்பான் ;
என்புடை பட்டபொழுதும் — நெஞ்சில்
ஏக்கமுறப் பொறுப்பவர் தம்மையுட்ப்பான் ;
இன்பத்தை எண்ணுபவர்க்கே — என்றும்
இன்பமிகத் தருவதி லின்பமுடையான் .

80

Introductory Remarks :

These are days when free-thinking is freely advocated. So far as our knowledge goes, the result is no thinking at all or perhaps some shallow thinking. One's claim to a knowledge greater than one's father's is nothing new. In his Essay on Criticism, Pope says :

“And still tomorrow's wiser than today
We think our fathers fools, so wise we grow ;
Our wiser sons, no doubt, will think us so”

Yet the only ambition of every true father is to see that his son is wiser than he. Says the great Thiruvalluvar “It is a joy to every man to find himself eclipsed in intelligence by his children.”

The son's duty is not to judge his father. “What is the duty of the son to his father ?” asks Thiruvalluvar. Who but

Though in years well advanced, not a wrinkle
 Mars my Father's face of youth eternal ;
 Neither sorrow nor dotage, nor fatigue
 At any time, nor malady, him affects.
 Fearless is he and dispassionate too ;
 No sides he aids to plague the dissidents.
 Full of great skill is he ; standing neutral

(72) He doth much the game of kismet enjoy.

When the woe-begone unto him complain
 Them he derides, but his love redeems ;
 " Unto Love hold fast ! That very instant
 Are burnt all thy sorrows : " so would he say.
 Bones break ; great is their ache and agony ;
 Yet they in grace endure ; these then he loves.
 Unto them that meditate happiness

(80) E'er happy is he to happiness grant.

Thiruvalluvar can answer this precisely and correctly? He says " It is to make the world ask: For what austerities of his, hath he been blessed with such a son ?"

Let a child therefore know that his father is a living god unto him. The saying in Tamil is: "There are no mantras superior to the words of Father." To this holy maxim, the great Indian epic, The Ramayana bears incontrovertible proof. Our models are Rama and Parasurama ; Puroo and Bhishma and Edgars, and not Edmunds.

In ten words, Willim Wordsworth packs one of the noblest truths when he says:

"Father ! — to God himself we cannot give
 A holier name"

Bharati hails Kannan the supreme (God) as Father and thus perpetuates the tradition fostered by the immortal Aazh-waars and Naayanmaar.

Notes

Line 1 : Unto earth, me did he send :

Bharati is a God-send. This is the message of the very first line of this poem. He is not a native of "this dim spot which men eall earth." He made a descent to earth at the express bidding of his father. In other words our Bharathi is an avatar.

Line 2 : Budha :

Budha is Mercury.

Lines 2 to 7 : My brothers.....of these :

The Seer Bharati has seen and therefore is he competent to say.

Surely there must be planets where human life thrives very well.

Lines 8 to 13 : Abundant.....glory great :

It is not within anybody's power to historise or describe God. But that is no reason why He should not be historised or described. What is attempted by Bharati is the supply of an inkling which in known terms dares reveal the unknown. The reader will do well to consult our notes on Vinaayakar Naan Mani Maalai.

Line 14 : Tho' demention....mark :

See notes on line 62, Kannan - My Friend.

The Supreme is a supreme mad man. Indeed Lord Siva is hailed as a mad man (Pitthan).

Lines 15-16 : Singular . way :

Are these the words of Bharati or Job ?

We humbly submit that t e lives of Naayanmaar, Azhwaars and devotees throughout the world are but a living commentary of these two lines of Bharati.

Lines 17-19 : My tongue ...to know :

See notes on lines 8 to 13.

Cf. ".....To Him, who hath nor name, nor form,
A thousand sacred names sing we" —*Tiruvaachakam*.

Line 20 : "Our Lord"... Kannan :

The name of God in every religion is "Our Lord".

In Vaishnavism He is Kannan; In Saivism He is Muk-Kannan.

Line 21 : In three-fold...sore :

The Trinity which came to explain the unity has eventually confounded men. He is beyond the Trinity. He is the "Turiya" or the "Chaturta" as the Vedas affirm.

Line 24 : "He is...Devas" say these :

So thought the unenlightened Munis of Taaruka forest.

Great was their austerity; but their illumination was darkness visible.

Cf. "'He is one of the Devas' say they."

Sivagnaana Siddhiyaar, 69, Supakkam.

The Lord is the Creator or the Devas. He is not one of them.

Lines 25-28 : He was born... traders :

The un-born is made to appear as born.

In the Gita the Lord explains this. It is Karma which is responsible for our birth. The Lord is above Karma.

Our body is wrought of Maaya. The Lord is above Maaya. He can assume any form and any number of forms as He likes We cannot. He can be everywhere. We cannot be.

Cf. "..... as tho' the nev'r-born

Is now born, He sans name manifests Himself

Bearing the Nomen Sambhanda Naathan

Deck'd with the garland of honied flowers

And doth live happily like the earth born

Eating, slumb' ring, fearing and enjoying !

May that Humaneness Divine, us protect."

—*St. Umapathy's Potrip-pahrodai*—Tr. T. N. R.

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The terms "Cow-herd" (Gopalan-Pasupathy and Good-Shepherd) are full of significances. The Lord is hailed as a Brahmin. "Aravaazhi Anthanan" are the words of Thiruvalluvar. All men at all degrees (Varnasrama) are dear to the Lord. There is nothing evil in the conception of castes. Vivekananda says : "It is in the nature of society to form itself into groups ; and what will go will be these privileges. Caste is a natural order ; I can perform one duty in social life, and you another ; you can govern a country, and I can mend a pair of old shoes, but that is no reason why you are greater than I, for can you mend my shoes ? Can I govern the country ? I am clever in mending shoes, you are clever in reading Vedas, but that is no reason why you should trample on my head ... Caste is good. That is the only natural way of solving life. Men must form themselves into groups, and you cannot get rid of that. Wherever you go, there will be caste. But that does not mean that there should be these privileges. They should be knocked on the head. And that is what we want, no privilege for any one, equal chances for all."

Lectures from Colombo to Almora, Pages 152-153.

Lines 29-30 : Dark is...gold rival :

The Lord is the grandest, the highest, the noblest and the most sublime version of Tagore's 'The King of the Dark Chamber'. In Vaishnavism, the Lord alone is the MALE. All others are women.

Golden hue is a gift of tapas, Read the life of the great Mummudi Bala Yogi. Golden hued dames symbolise devotees, pure and unsullied.

Cf. Brides of the Christ.

Line 32 : At your.....thaumaturgic :

See notes on line 70, Kannan — My Mother.

Line 33 : Befriend.....the poor :

Cf. "God is Help sure to the destitute." *A Tamil adage.*

Lines 33-34 : and is ... wealthy :

Wealth is held in trust for proper distribution. It should not be hoarded,

Cf. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle,
than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."
Matthew, 19, 24.

Here the rich man is a hoarder.

(Camel is a huge rope something akin to our தேர் வடம்.)

Lines 35-36 : To them ... abundant :

Cf. *Fortuna favet fortibus.* (Fortune favours the brave).

Lines 38-39 : His weather-cock ... new morn :

The ways of the Providence are mysterious. One
might have lived with Him for aeons. Yet one cannot
predict Him. Remember what happened to Lucifer.

Lines 39-40 . He seeks ... lay waste :

According to Triloka-Sitaram God is a tiller of the Void.
He is also a lover of songs and hymns.

Cf. "... both heaven and earth shall high extol

Thy praises, with the innumerable sound
Of Hymns and sacred songs "

Paradise Lost, III, 146-148.

Lines 41-42 : Never in ... unpleasant :

The popular Tamil saying is "The Gnaani (the
enlightened) is not affected by pleasure or pain." Only the
fettered are affected by the pairs of opposites. God is for
ever fetterless.

Lines 43 to 45 : that clarity ... will he work :

He will be cruel to be kind.

Cf. "May that Cruel Kindness us protect "

St. Umapathy's Potrip-pahrodai *Tr T N. R.*

Line 46 : Fate :

See our notes on Vinaayakar Naan Mani Maalai.

See PP. XXVI and XXVII, Preface. The Kural by
V. V. S. Iyer.

Lines 49-56 : He did .. very Vedas :

It is the spirit, not the letters, that counts. Veda means knowledge. It cannot be crammed between the two covers of a book. It is infinite. You cannot force infinity into a little jar, cover it and set the seal thereon of Sulaiman.

The letters of the Vedas are not eternal, but the spirit of the Vedas is. It is Consciousness (Chaitanyam) that pervades and sustains everything. Its living presence can be felt in the meanest of things. Says Wordsworth.

“ To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears. ”
Says Tennyson.

“ Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is. ”

These words of Tennyson are Vedic and Vedantic.
So it is Thiruvalluvar said

“ In whate’er that is being uttered by
Whomsoe’er, wisdom seeks the truth thereof. ”

Lines 57 - 58 : Four are ... laid waste :

See notes infra on lines 25 - 28.

Lines 59 - 64 : Right conduct ... appearance :

Greatness by birth is now an exploded myth. As Thiruvalluvar says “ The manner of birth is the same for all men : but their reputations vary because they differ in the lives that they lead. ”

Even in olden days character was held to be more important than birth into a particular caste. Mere breathing is not life. Living well is life.

Lines 65 - 66 : Tho’ in years ... eternal :

Cf. “ I will be strong ;

I will grow into strength, I will age into youth ”

Agni and other poems, p 35, Bharati.

Lines 70-72 : No sides ... enjoy :

Cf. "Behold the men who cleave unto the feet of Him
who is beyond like and dislike." *Kural.*

Lines 73-74 : When ... he derides :

A jeremiad is not a prayer. He who indulges in this is like a beggar exposing his sores and wounds to evoke pity. The brave are blessed with fortitude. They endure and complain not. Neither do they curse.

No man faced death with more courage than Socrates. The agent of the Eleven who was to hand over the cup of poison to Socrates said : "Socrates, I shall have no need to complain about you, as I have about others, for cursing and swearing at me when I do my duty and order them to drink the poison ... Good bye, and try to bear what you must as easily as you can ' Bursting into tears he (the agent) turned away."

The Trial and Death of Socrates, Pages 172, 173.

Lines 75-76 : "Unto Love ... thy sorrows" :

Love is the Religion of Bharati.

Lines 77-78 : Bones break ... he loves :

See notes for lines 73-74.

Cf. "Like sheaves of corn he gathers you unto himself.

He threshes you to make you naked.

He sifts you to free you from your husks.

He grinds you to whiteness.

He kneads you until you are pliant

And then he assigns you to his sacred fire, that you

may become sacred bread for God's sacred feast."

— *Kahlil Gibran.*

Lines 79-80 : Unto them grant :

God is Aananda (bliss). Contemplate Him as
bliss and it becomes yours. Nay, You are
oned with bliss.

கண்ணன் — என் சேவகன்

- கூலிமிகக் கேட்பார் கொடுத்ததெலாந் தாமற்ப்பார் ;
 வேலைமிக வைத்திருந்தால் வீட்டிலே தங்கிடுவார்
 ' ஏனடா நீ நேற்றைக் கிங்குவர வில்லை ' யென்றால்
 பரணையிலே தேளிருந்து பல்லாற் கடித்த தென்பார் ;
 வீட்டிலே பெண்டாட்டி மேற்பூதம் வந்ததென்பார் ;
 பாட்டியார் செத்துவிட்ட பன்னிரண்டா நாளென்பார் ;
 ஓயாமற் பொய்யுரைப்பார், ஒன்றுரைக்க வேறுசெய்வார்.
 தாயாதியோடு தனியிடத்தே பேசிடுவார் ;
 உள்வீட்டுச் செய்தியெலாம் ஊரம் பலத்துரைப்பார் ;
 (10) எள்வீட்டி வில்லையென்றால் எங்குமுர சறைவார்.

- சேவகராற் பட்டசிரமமிக வுண்டு, கண்டிர் !
 சேவகரில் லாவிடிலோ, செய்கை நடக்கவில்லை.
 இங்கிதனால் யானும் இடர்மிகுந்து வாடுகையில்
 எங்கிருந்தோ வந்தான், ' இடைச்சாதி நான் ' என்றான் ;
 " மாடு கன்று மேய்த்திடுவேன், மக்களை நான் காத்திடுவேன் ;
 வீடு பெருக்கி விளக்கேற்றி வைத்திடுவேன் ;
 சொன்னபடி கேட்பேன் ; துணிமணிகள் காத்திடுவேன் ;
 சின்னக் குழந்தைக்குச் சிங்காரப் பாட்டிசைத்தே
 ஆட்டங்கள் காட்டி அழாதபடி பார்த்திடுவேன் ;
 (20) காட்டுவழி யானாலும் கள்ளர்பய மானாலும்

இரவிற் பகலிலே யெந்தேர மானாலும்
 சிரமத்தைப் பார்ப்பதில்லை, தேவரீர் தம்முடனே
 சுற்றுவேன், தங்களுக்கோர் துன்பமுரு மற்காப்பேன் ;
 கற்றவித்தை யேதுமில்லை ; காட்டு மனிதன் ஐயே !
 ஆனபொழுதுங் கோலடி குத்துப்போர் மற்போர்
 நானறிவேன் ; சற்றும் நயவஞ் சனைபுரியேன் ''
 என்றுபல சொல்லி நின்றான்.

KANNAN — MY PAGE

“Prosperity be thy page.” — *Shakespeare*

- Wages exorbitant they do demand,
What they receive, they forget without qualms.
“Sirrah ! why didn’t you turn up yesterday ?”
When I thus question, pat comes the reply :
- (5) “Beshrew me, as I an old pot emptied
A scorpion with its teeth, me did bite ;”
“By demon was my wife possessed ;”
“Alas it was the twelfth day o’ granny’s death !”
Never - weary fibsters are these
- (10) Who do acts to plain orders contrary.
They commune in secret with hostile kin ;
They make public the affairs of family
If the house ’s in want, they loud trumpet it.
Many are the hardships by servants caused ;
- (15) But sans servants, nought could be done either.
So, when by this state was I sore distress’ed
Came he, from where I know not. “A cow - herd
Am I” quoth he. “Cattle Sir ! will I graze ;
Children ’il I take care of ; sweep clean the house
- (20) And keep it lighted ; obey all orders ;
Guard thy wealth and knick - knacks too ; lilt will I
Lovely lays, to the sweet little infant
And fun enact to keep it from mewling ;
Though it be the jungle dense, by robbers
- (25) Infeste’d, whether it be day or night,
Unmindful of the hour or fatigue great,
I will be with your goodself to guard you
From hazards. Sir ! little is my learning ;
Though jungle - bred, well - vers’ed, aye, am I
- (30) In single - stick, boxing and wrestling too ;
Nev’r will I the least deception practise ”

“ ஏது பெயர் ? சொல் ” என்றேன் .

“ ஒன்றுமில்லை ; கண்ணன் என்பர் ஊரில் உள்ளோர்
என்னை ” என்றான் .

(30) கட்டுறுதி யுள்ளவுடல், கண்ணிலே நல்லகுணம்,
ஒட்டுறவே நன்று வுரைத்திடுஞ் சொல் — ஈங்கிவற்றால்

தக்கவனென் றுள்ளத்தே சார்ந்த மகிழ்ச்சியுடன்
“ மிக்கவுரை பலசொல்லி விருதுபல சாற்றுகியும் ;
கூலியென்ன கேட்கின்றாய் ? கூறு ” கென்றேன், “ ஐயனே!
தாலிகட்டும் பெண்டாட்டி சந்ததிக ளேதுமில்லை
நானோர் தனியாள் ; நரைதிரைதோன் ருவிடினும்
ஆன வயதிற் களவில்லை ; தேவரீர்
ஆதரித்தாற் போதும் அடியேனை ; நெஞ்சிலுள்ள
காதல் பெரிதெனக்குக் காசுபெரி தில்லை ” என்றான் .
பண்டைக் காலத்துப் பயித்தியத்தி லொன்றெனவே

(40) கண்டு, மிகவும் களிப்புடனே நானவனை

ஆளாகக் கொண்டு விட்டேன் . அன்று முதற் கொண்டு
நாளாக நாளாக, நம்மிடத்தே கண்ணனுக்குப்
பற்று மிகுந்து வரல் பார்க்கின்றேன் ; கண்ணனால்தான்
பெற்றுவரு நன்மையெலாம் பேசி முடியாது .
கண்ணை யிமையிரண்டும் காப்பது போல் என்குடும்பம்
வண்ணமுறக் காக்கின்றான், வாய் முணுத்தல்
கண்டறியேன் .

வீதி பெருக்குகிறான் ; வீடு சுத்த மாக்குகிறான் .
தாதியார்செய் குற்றமெலாந் தட்டி யடக்குகிறான் ;
மக்களுக்கு வாத்தி, வளர்ப்புத்தாய், வைத்தியனாய்
(50) ஒக்க நயங் காட்டுகிறான் ; ஒன்றுங் குறைவின்றிப்

பண்டமெலாஞ் சேர்த்துவைத்துப் பால்வாங்கி மோர்வாங்கிப்
பெண்டுகளை தாய்போற் பிரியமுற ஆதரித்து
நண்பனாய், மந்திரியாய், நல்லா சிரியனுமாய்
பண்பிலே தெய்வமாய்ப் பார்வையிலே சேவகனாய்
எங்கிருந்தோ வந்தான், இடைச் சாதி யென்று சொன்னான் .

43

These words and like these, good many he said.

"Now tell me thy name" quoth I and he said :

"O nothing ! people just call me Kannan."

(35) 'A frame of steel and well-built ; soulful eyes,

Well-uttered words that impress' - by these

I found him an able hand; glad was I.

"Many are thy words ; so too thy claims ;

Say, how much do you expect as wages ?"

(40) I thus. "My Lord, nor heirs, nor wedded wife

Have I; I am a lone soul ; aye, my hairs

May not be grey ; nor my frame look oldish ;

But I am old, aye, very very old ;

Pray be aidant to me ; a loving heart

(45) Alone, do I value and not money"

He thus. I took him for a fool of yore

And gladly did I list him as my page.

From that day, as on pass the days, I find

An e'er-increasing love of attachment

(50) Fastening Kannan to me ; pow'rless is

My tongue, the benefi's to expatiate

That Kannan does unto me ; like eye-lids

The eyes protecting, he my family guards ;

Murmur he doth never ; the street he sweeps ;

(55) Keeps tidy the house ; he rules well the maids

And corrects them with authority great ;

He is a tutor, a foster-mother

And a doctor to the loving children.

Lack he forbends ; provision doth he store ;

(60) Milk and e'en butter-milk he ignores not ;

His care for the women-folk is motherly.

A friend, a minister, a teacher great,

By nature a true God, and by appearance

A page's he who came - from where - , I know not.

இங்கிவனை யான்பெறவே என்னதவஞ் செய்து விட்டேன் !
 கண்ணன் எனதகத்தே கால்வைத்த நான்முதலாய்
 எண்ணம் விசாரம் எதுவு மவன் பொறுப்பாய்ச்
 செல்வம், இளமாண்பு, சீர், சிறப்பு, நற்கீர்த்தி,
 (60) கல்வி, அறிவு, கவிதை, சிவயோகம்
 தெளிவே வடிவாஞ் சிவஞானம், என்றும்
 ஒளிசேர் நலமனைத்தும் ஓங்கிவரு கின்றன காண் !
 கண்ணனைநான் ஆட்கொண்டேன் ! கண்கொண்டேன் !
 கண்கொண்டேன் !
 கண்ணனெனை யாட்கொள்ளக் காரணமு முள்ளனவே !

Introductory Remarks

Our experience informs us that a servant is a paid menace. He (or she) is loose-tongued, disobedient and at times dishonest to boot. Juvenal says : ' Lingua mali pars pessima servi ' (The tongue of a bad servant is his worst part.) So a servant who is really tight-lipped, obedient and efficient is a rarity. One gets such a servant as a blessing from the Almighty. Small wonder the great Sangam poet Pisiraanthaiaar assigned very great importance to this factor.

So it is our poet says rather emphatically : " Many are the hardships by servants caused But sans servants, nought could be done either." The servant-problem is one of the real dilemmas in life which is why Colley Cibber says : "In all the necessities of life there is not a greater plague than servants. "

One great feature about these servants is their readiness to invent reasons for their misbehaviour, disobedience and inefficiency. All explanations offered by them are absolutely bad ; but they hold fast to the theory that a bad explanation is better than no explanation. They are incorrigible, as a class.

The memory of a servant is a variable factor. He has a perfect faculty for remembering what is due to him. However regarding receipts, he is blissfully ignorant. He over-draws and

- (65) He said he was a cow-herd ; how great should
 My tapas be, that did, aye, him secure.
 From that day when Kannan set his foot in
 I left all thinking and planning t' his care.
 Wealth, youth, glory, greatness and renown good,
- (70) Learning, wisdom, poesy, Siva-Yogam
 And God's own knowledge which is clarity —
 These and all that's good, bright and prosperous
 Came seeking me on the increase ; Kannan
 I possess and him do I, aye, hold fast.
- (75) Ha ! behold this ! I am blessed with vision
 And inner eye, and there are good reasons
 Why Kannan should save me, aye, even me.

forgets it. If a shrewd employer has unimpeachable evidence to prove this, the servant is yet undaunted. He accuses his employer for having allowed him to over-draw. The employer learns his catechism very late in his life.

Servants are born magicians. When they have sufficiently over-drawn, they perform their tour de force called the disappearing act.

The great Swift wrote " Directions to Servants ". People were upset by this piece of writing. They thought that the great Dean had no business to add fuel to the fire already full ablaze. We do not blame Swift. In our opinion Swift underwent a full-term apprenticeship under a typical servant and the knowledge he obtained assumed the form of words. That's all. His directions contain no ruse or subterfuge which was not already known to the servant clan.

You can get on with your servants only when you put to practice the following maxim : " Some get and forget ; some give and forgive "

Notes

Lines 1-2 : Wages qualms :

The memory of a servant is a one-way track. It is a settled law with them to forget all payments received by them. They follow this rule of convenience which has ripened into a law through generations.

Line 3 : " Sirrah ! ... yesterday ? "

The servant is endowed with an extraordinary knowledge to let down the master most perniciously. He is not there when you need him most. He will intrude on you when you wish him to absent himself

Line 4 : pat comes the reply :

You can never catch him napping, though he may sleep soundly. The answers, the replies, the explanations of a servant are more voluminous than even Thomas Aquinas's

Line 5-6 : " Beshrew me ... bite " :

' A scorpion with teeth ' — a species unknown to zoology, is as familiar to the servant as a familiar to the witch. Teeth or no teeth, a scorpion will silence any master.

Line 7 : " By demon ... possessed " :

From the unnatural, the explanation turns to supernatural.

The servant's wife might or might not have been possessed by a demon But surely the master is possessed by his servant.

Line 8 : " Alas ! death ! " :

The technique is changed. The methodology is known as "evocation of affection". If it is the 11th day of granny's death, the master should have known about the death, some twelve days ago. But no such death was reported to the

master Yet that is not the point for consideration here. Death or no death, the twelfth day of death is a proper excuse and very religious to boot.

Lines 9-10: Never-weary..... contrary :

They are unblushing liars. They are least worried about lying They lie so that they may live and thrive too. They act contrary to express orders for the heck of it.

Line 11 : They commune in secret with hostile kin :

In the original, we find the word "Daayathi". These are agnates. Under the old Hindu Law, the agnates of a Brahmin are his potential heirs and they inherit in certain circumstances. As a rule they are interested in the happening of such events (such as the death of an only son and happenings as these'. Naturally the agnates are eager vultures circling over the dying. The prepositus has inherited them and they want to inherit from him. These are therefore inherited critics. One will very much avoid them. The servants take extreme pleasure in confabulating with them in secrecy. This is an evil which no one will like to stomach.

Line 12 : They makethe family :

Christopher Johnson prescribed a padlock for the mouth of the servant. Otherwise the master is not safe.

Line 13: If the house.....trumpet it :

The tongue of a servant is a public tom-tom.

Lines 14 - 15 : Many are done either :

Cf. "In all the necessities of life there is not a greater plague than servants." — *Cibber*.

The servants are a necessary evil. You cannot live with them or without them.

Line 16 : So, when distresse'd :

This is the eternal plight of every householder..

Line 17 : Came he ... I know not :

Kannan came. From where? Who can say?

This is a true description of the descent of God.

Lines 17 - 18 : "A cow - herd Am I" :

The words in the original are "idaicchaathi". They also mean the middle race. If so, it is a reference to Him who is the middle in the Trinity.

The term cow - herd refers to the Lord who is Pasu-Pathy.

Line 18 : Cattle :

Cattle (Pasu) refer to lives.

Line 19 : Children, will I take care of :

All are the children of God and Kannan is the Protector.

Lines 19 - 20 : sweep clean ... lighted :

The human body is a house; it is a temple. The spirit dwells there. So it should not be allowed to become a basket of rubbish. It must be kept clean and lighted. This light in Saiva Siddhanta is called Sivaprakaasam.

Cf. "Your house is your larger body"

— *Gibran.*

In "Siva - Sakti", Bharati compares the body to a big city.

Line 20 : obey all orders :

The Lord prides himself as the servant of devotees. He is called Bakta - Bakthimaan. He implements every one of the desires of his devotee.

Line 21 : Guard thy wealth ... too :

God protects not only the spiritual wealth of his devotee but also his spiritual vagaries.

We have translated "thunimani" as wealth and knick-knacks. In common parlance thunimani refers to dress. Thuni means garment. Mani means gem. In our view thunimani connotes wealth as well as trinkets.

Lines 21—23: Ilt will I mewl ng :

When a devotee is distressed, the Lord can divert him into fun. The Lord's sense of humour is infinite. He is at His best in this aspect in His incarnation as Kannan. Siva too is full of sport. A perusal of Thiruvilayaadal Puraanam will be very rewarding. Siva lilted a song, enacted fun and drove away the enemy of Paanar.

Line 24: jungle dense :

It is the human mind.

Line 24: robbers :

These are the five senses.

Vide Sivagnaana Botham, Sutra 8.

Lines 25 - 28: Whether it be ... from hazards

The Deity is ever-vigilant to save the devotee.

Line 28: little is my learning :

The Lord never went to any school. He is Wisdom.

Line 29: jungle-bred :

That is, untamable (save by love).

Lines 29—30: well-versed too :

Cf. "In the art of warfare and in all arts

Behold, he is a pundit consummate!"

— Kannan—My Friend. Ll. 76-77.

Line 31: Nev'r will practise :

God will test his devotee, but deceive —, never.

Line 34: "Oh nothing ! Kannan : "

Cf. "... .. To Him, Who hath nor name nor form

A thousand sacred names sing we ... "

— Tiruvaachakam. Tr. G. U. Pope.

Lines 40 – 41 : .. nor heirs ... Have I :

Cf. "Bavan Brahmachari, Paal-Mozhi Kanni "

(The Lord is a Bachelor ; She whose words are milk (of wisdom) is a Spinster.)

— *Sivagnaana Siddhiaar.*

Line 41 : I am a lone soul:

God alone is. All else have their being in God.

Cf. "I am convinced that God is and God alone is."

— *Agni and other poems by Bharati, P 33.*

Lines 41—43 : my heirs ... very old :

See notes on lines 65 – 66, — *Kannan — My Father.*

Lines 44 – 45 : a loving heart ... not money :

God is not for sale But love enslaves Him.

Cf. "And chiefly thou O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure "

— *Paradise Lost, 1, 17 18,*

Line 46 : a fool of yore :

Cf. (1) " Tho' sometimes he behaves as one insane "

— *Bharati.*

(2) " Tho' dementation frequent his acts doth mark "

— *Bharati.*

See notes on line 14, Kannan — *My Father*

and also notes on line 62, Kannan — *My Friend.*

Lines 52 – 64 : like eye-lids ... I know not:

Cf. (1) " The Lord my pasture shall prepare
And feed me with a shepherd's care
His presence shall my wants supply,
And guard me with a watchful eye."

— *Addison, The Spectator. No. 444.*

(2) "God will provide."

— *Genesis, xxii, 8.*

Line 62 : When Kannan set his foot in :

The word "Aham" in the original which means 'a house' is here translated as "in". This translation is the right one, having regard to Bharati's usage of 'Aham' occurring in Kannan — My Lover (1). Kannan set his foot in the heart and soul of Bharati. Thirugnanasambhandar says: "En ulame puhuntha athanaal" (as He his entry into my heart (soul) hath made). Since this manifestation, prosperity becomes the page of Bharati. Lines 70 to 74 catalogue the blessings of Bharati. Bharati sums up all the benedictions in these words: "Kannan I possess, and him do I, aye hold fast." As Bharati himself confesses

"pow'rless is My tongue, the benefits to expatiate
That Kannan does unto me. "

Lines 75 - 76 : vision and Inner eye :

Inner eye is what beholds God Who is light. "It is not by pasa-jnana, nor by pasu - jnana, in other words, not by sense perception nor by discriminative reason, that the soul can know reality, God. To know Him is God's gift, an experience of illumination to which the prepared soul is brought by the instruction of a guru in whom God dwells. Such knowledge is pati-jnana, variously termed in Tamil tiruvadignanam, knowledge of God, meynanam, knowledge of the truth or reality, and nanakkan, spiritual vision and illumination."

Siva-Nana-Bothem, A manual of Saiva Religious

Doctrine by

Gordon Matthews, page 5 (Preface).

Cf. " ... thou celestial Light
Shine inward"

Paradise Lost, III, 51—52.

(5)

கண்ணன் — என் அரசன்

- (1) பகைமை முற்றி முதிர்ந்திடு மட்டிலும்
பார்த்திருப்ப தல்லா லொன்றுஞ் செய்திடான் ;
நகைபுரிந்து பொறுத்துப் பொறுத்தையோ
நாட்கள் மாதங்க ளாண்டுகள் போக்குவான் ;
- (2) கண்ணன் வென்று பகைமை யழிந்துநாம்
கண்ணிற் காண்ப தரிதெனத் தோன்றுமே ;
எண்ணமிட் டெண்ண மிட்டுச் சலித்துநாம்
இழந்த நாட்கள் யுகமெனப் போகுமே.
- (3) படைகள் சேர்த்தல் பரிசனம் சேர்த்திடல்
பணமுண் டாக்க லெதுவும் புரிந்திடான் ;
'இடையன், வீரமி லாதவன், அஞ்சினோன்'
என்றவர் சொலும் ஏச்சிற்கு நாணிலான் ;
- (4) கொல்லப் பூத மனுப்பிடு மாமனே
கோலு யர்த்துல காண்டு களித்திட,
முல்லை மென்னகை மாதர்க்கும் பாட்டிற் கும்
மோக முற்றுப் பொழுதுகள் போக்குவான் ;
- (5) வான நீர்க்கு வருந்தும் பயிரென
மாந்தர் மற்றிவண் போர்க்குத் தவிக்கவும்,
தானங் கீர்த்தனை தாளங்கள் கூத்துக்கள்
தனிமை வேயங்குழ லென்றிவை போற்றுவான் ;
- (6) காலினைக் கையி னாற்பற்றிக் கொண்டுநாம்
கதியெ மக்கொன்று காட்டுவை யென்றிட்டால்
நாலி லொன்று பலித்திடுங் காணென்பான் ;
நாமச் சொல்லின் பொருளெங் குணர்வதே ?
- (7) நாம வன்வலிநம்பி யிருக்கவும்
நாண மின்றிப் பதுங்கி வளருவான் ;
தீமை தன்னை விலக்கவுஞ் செய்குவான் ;
சிறுமை கொண் டொளித் தோடவுஞ் செய்குவான் ;

KANNAN — MY SOVEREIGN ✓

“ Honour the king ”

New Testament, I Peter, ii, 17.

He merely eyes and does nothing at all
Till hostility ripens and 's ready
To burst ; on he smiles and is e'er-patient
Wasting precious days, months and even years.

- (5) Certain 'll it seem that in our days, Kannan
Can never win and quell the enemies.
Sore vexed thus our exacerbate'd days
Will move on impotent like aeons slow.

- (10) Gathering of armies, men and money —
None of these will he ever do at all ;
Shameless is he to th' calumny of those
That him call a base unmanly cow-herd.

- (15) Whilst his uncle that him sent a demon
To murder, reigns supreme in delight great
He, charmed by the smiles of dames of white teeth
And ditties sweet, will his time while away.

- (20) Like wilting crops that ache for rain from sky
Whilst his subjects are itching for war, here,
He will revel in music and drama ;
Else with flute or solitude 'll he be oned.

While flat we fall and hug his feet with hands
Him praying to lead us to redemption
“ One in four may with fruition meet ” 'll he say :
The import of these words, who can ever know ?

- (25) While we on his valour and might depend
Shamelessly will he wax great in hiding ;
He may eke at times the evil avert
And sometimes flee he may most unmanly.

- (8) தந்தி ரங்கள் பயிலவு செய்குவான் ;
சவுரி யங்கள் பழகவுஞ் செய்குவான் ;
மந்தி ரத்திற னும்பல காட்டுவான் ;
வலிமை யின்றிச் சிறுமையில் வாழ்குவான் .
- (9) காலம் வந்துகை கூடும்ப் போதிலோர்
கணத்தி லேபுதி தாக விளங்குவான் ;
ஆல கால விடத்தினைப் போலவே
அகில முற்று மசைந்திடச் சீறுவான் ;
- (10) வேரும் வேரடி மண்ணு மிலாமலே
வெந்து போகப் பகைமை பொசுக்குவான் ;
பாரும் வானமு மாயிர மாண்டுகள்
பட்டதுன்பங் கணத்திடை மாற்றுவான் .
- (11) சக்க ரத்தை யெடுப்ப தொருகணம்
தருமம் பாரில் தழைத்தல் மறுகணம்
இக்கணத்தி லிடைக்கண மொன்றுண்டோ ?
இதனுள் னேபகை மாய்த்திட வல்லன் காண் .
- (12) கண்ண னெங்க ளரசன் புகழினைக்
கவிதை கொண் டெந்தக் காலமும் போற்றுவேன் ;
திண்ணை வாயில் பெருக்க வந் தேனெனைத்
தேசம் போற்றத்தன் மந்திரி யாக்கினான் .
- (13) நித்தச் சோற்றினுக் கேவல் செயவந்தேன்
நிகரிலாப் பெருஞ் செல்வ முதவினான் .
வித்தை நன்குகல் லாதவன் என்னுளே
வேத நுட்பம் விளங்கிடச் செய்திட்டான் .
- (14) கண்ண னெம்பெரு மானருள் வாழ்கவே !
கலி யழிந்து புவித்தவம் வெல்கவே !
அண்ண லின்னருள் நாடிய நாடுதான்
அவல நீங்கிப் புகழி லுயர்கவே .

He will also practise ruses subtle

- (30) Besides display of true heroism great ;
He can the power of mantras reveal
And can also live wretched, weak and base.

At the hour divinely ordained, he will
In a trice turn completely new and great ,

- (35) Like unto the dreade'd Aalakaala
Will he rage and th' whole universe will shake.

Burn he will to cinders the enemies
And them total extirpate — root and branch ;
Torments of earth and heaven for aeons

- (40) Will in a moment by him stand changed.

In just a moment he will his disc wield
In th' very next moment thrives righteousness ;
Is there an interregnum betwixt these two ?
So quick is his annihilation great !

- (45) The glory of Kannan, my Sovereign-Liege
In solemn strain and verse will I hymn alway !
Me a mere sweeper poor of his house and yard
A minister he made, by nation hailed.

To me a menial for daily bread

- (50) Toiling, great wealth beyond compare, gave he ;
Into me of inadequate learning
He distilled th' essence subtle of Vedas.

May the grace of my Lord Kannan flourish !
May Kali vile perish ! May Earth flourish !

- (55) May the nation that doth seek the grace sweet
Of th' Lord-King thrive in glory sans blemish !

Introductory Remarks

"A King's a King, do Fortune what she can" said Michael Drayton. King Lear who by his foolish acts unkinged himself was yet, "Ay, every inch a king."

Bismarck in a speech he delivered in 1847 asserted: "The Prussian Sovereigns are in possession of a crown not by the grace of the people, but by God's grace." The great juriconsult Blackstone said: "That the king can do no wrong is a necessary and fundamental principle of the English constitution."

"Le Roi est mort, Vive le Roi," (The King is dead. Long live the King!) Blackstone is of the view that the King never dies.

"Qui nescit dissimulare, nescit regnare" (He who knows not how to dissimulate, knows not how to reign) was a favourite maxim with the French Kings. In fact Louis IX of France declared that all the Latin the Dauphin needed to learn was contained in this single maxim

So far as India is concerned, the King is an incarnation of the Deity. Shakespeare was voicing forth a well-established Indian dictum when he said (in King Richard II):

"Not all the water in the rough rude sea
Can wash the balm from an anointed King;
The breath of worldly men cannot depose
The deputy elected by the Lord."

A tyrant-king was suffered and obeyed.

"And if Jove stray, who dares say Jove doth ill?"

Tyranny according to Indians is self-destructive-
It will perish of its own accord. Says Valluvar:

"Verily it is the tears of those groaning under
oppression that wear away the prosperity of a king."

However the Indian kings, barring a few, firmly believed that their power is a heavenly gift for doing good.

The righteous kings never deviated from the path of truth and justice. Neither nepotism nor favouritism had any role to play in their life or reign. The Pandyan king gave up his life to expiate his only act of injustice. Manu Neeti Chozha was prepared to kill his only son who unwittingly killed a calf. To be precise, he did not kill the calf. It darted most unexpectedly between the wheels of a running chariot and got killed.

Gods and sons of Gods have reigned in India that is Bharat.

How Kannan reigned is the subject-matter of this poem. Who can comprehend Kannan, the king?

Notes

Lines 1-4: He merely even years :

The king's subjects are aghast at the supreme indifference of their King. But the subjects are not wiser than the King. It is the King who can judge the opportune moment. The Bible says "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven." — *Ecclesiastes, III, 1.*

"The crow triumpheth over the owl when it is day: even so opportunity is a great thing to the prince who would vanquish his enemy." Kural 481. Chapter 49 of Thirukkural is a splendid treatise on judging the opportune moment.

There is no point in indecent indulgence of haste. "Hasten slowly" says an Italian adage. Kannan's waiting is meaningful patience.

Lines 5-8: Certain aeons slow :

The people in the realm are only ordinary folk and they can only get confused for nothing. Fear has caught hold of them. So their thought, word and deed are utterly tainted by fear. When one is afraid, one imagines the very worst and becomes a prey unto one's own fear. One always expects everybody to react according to one's own thinking. Any commission or omission contrary to one's expectation throws

one into an irretrievable higgledy-piggledy confusion. Naturally one gets exacerbated One may romp and chafe, all in vain.

Lines 9-12: Gathering cow-herd :

A King is to be endowed with six, to wit, troops, populace, substance, council, alliances and fortifications. When a King is lacking in these, his subjects feel jittery, and all the more so, when they perceive war in procinct. The hostile group may wag continually a pestilent tongue in dispraise of an apparently indifferent King. Their calumny may also assail the ears of the King. The King who is sure of himself, and who is an army by himself may be untouched by those bitter words. One of the basic qualifications of a King is "to bear with words that are bitter to the ear." Kannan's subjects not knowing the worth of their Lord are worried beyond measure to find him unangered by calumny.

Lines 13 18: Whilst for war, here :

To one who is vexed with you, every one of your actions is an eye-sore

The subjects who think that they are more valorous than their King will be the first to desert the King in the field of battle. The monkeys which so much vaunted were the first to run away at the advent of Kumbhakarna

Lines 19-20: He will be oned :

It is the very nature of Kannan to seek the void or else to breathe the flute.

Cf. "He seeks and dwells in the void, and in songs

And stories he doth his hours lay waste."

— Kannan— *My Father*, lines 39 - 40.

Lines 21-24: While flat ever know ? ;

Kannan is not happy with people who are driven to him by distress only. People in distress vex themselves and vex others. They seek to be consoled not knowing the impotency of consolation. The words of Kannan to them are laconic and oracular.

"One in four may with fruition meet" says he. Four are the purushaartas and the attainment of these is by tapas.

Cf. "One or two may with fruition meet" said she.

From the hymn of Bharati beginning with the words :
"In the dim moon-light" (Mangiyathor nilavinaly).

Lines 25-28 : While we ... unmanly :

Dissimulation is a kingly art. See introductory remarks.

Kannan is delighted to keep people guess.

Lines 29-31 : He will ... reveal :

Cf. "In the art of warfare and in all arts,

Behold, he is a pundit consummate !"

Kannan — My Friend, lines 76-77.

Line 32 : And can ... base :

This is dissimulation par excellence.

Line 33 : At the hour ... ordained :

Even God awaits the hour. It is not because it is to be thought that He is subject to Time. No, He is always beyond Time. We should know however that Kaala-Kaala is also Kaala-Rupi.

See also notes on lines 1 to 4.

Lines 35-36 : Like unto ... will shake :

The wrath of the God is infinite.

Cf. (1) "He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored

He hath loosed the fateful lightning of
his terrible swift sword :

His truth is marching on."

Julia Ward Howe, Battle Hymn of the Republic.

(2) "Who with his miracles doth make
Amazed heaven and earth to shake"

Psalms cxlvi, Milton.

(3) "The purple winepress of the wrath of God"

Lionel Johnson,

Lines 37-38 : Burn he will ... root and branch :

Cf "Es lebt ein Gott zu strafen und zu
rachen" (There is a God to punish and avenge).
Schiller, Wilhelm Tell Act, 4, Sc 3, l. 37.

Lines 39-40 : Torments .. changed :

Cf. "God has His whips here to a two-fold end,
The bad to punish, and the good t' amend."
Robert Herrick, Whips.

Lines 41-44 : In Just ... annihilation great !

The disc is but the sankalpa of God As revealed in
Siva-Gnaa-Botham, God can act without acting.

There is an interregnum between our resolve and the first
motion of our act. Not so for God.

Lines 45-46 : The glory ... hymn always :

All praise belongs truly to God only.

Lines 47-48 : Me a mere sweeper ... hailed :

This 'anubhuti' of Bharati merits a word of explanation.
Bharati is the Cincinnatus of Tamil Nadu He was plodding in
his field of journalism to sweep the cobwebs of superstition
and sloth from the minds of his brethren. When he came to
Pondichery to continue his plodding, he bloomed into a divine
writer whose words ruled the realm.

The famous P. Sri called on V. V. S. Iyer. The great Iyer
told him: "You know, Bharati became a Minister in
Pondichery." P. Sree. was nonplussed. Iyer quoted the
following lines : "Me a mere sweeper poor of his house and
yard

A minister he made, by nation hailed." Iyer himself
explained it thus. Bharati the mere journalist bloomed into a
divine poet at Pondichery.

Bharati Naan Kendethum Kettathum by P. Sree Page 53,

Lines 49-52 : To me.....of Vedas.

Bharati was more a Shakespeare than a Milton. As Prema Nandakumar says, he was initiated into a study of Vedas by Sri Aurobindo. But as R. A. Padmanabhan remarks he was never a chela of Sri Aurobindo.

Cf. "Unto him blesse'd by the Mammoth Young
Learning and Wisdom come unsought, untaught".

(The Mamoth Young is Vinaayaka)
Thiruvarulpayan, by St Umapathy. Tr. T. N. R

Lines 53-56 : May the grace.....sans blemish :

Thus doths Bharati seal his hymn with a benediction.

For Kali, refer notes on Vinaayakar Naan Mani Maalai.

Thus spake the King of Sadik to his people. "When you deemed me weak and a misruler, you yourselves were weak and misruling. And now the land fares well because it is in your will. I am but a thought in the mind of you all, and I exist not save in your actions. There is no such person as governor. Only the governed exist to govern themselves."

The Wanderer by Kahlil Gibran, Page 26.

A passage from Paradise Regained, Book III is extracted below for the benefit of the translator as well as the reader.

"To whom our Saviour answer thus returned
All things are best fulfilled in their due time,
And time there is for all things....."

.....
The Father in his purpose hath decreed,
He in whose hand all times and seasons roll.
What if he hath decreed that I shall first
Be tried in humble state, and things adverse,
By tribulations, injuries, insults,
Contempts and scorns, and snares and violence,
Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting
Without distrust or doubt, that he may know
What I can suffer, how obey ? Who best
Can suffer, best can do ; best reign....."

கண்ணன் — என் சீடன்

- யானே யாகி என்னலாற் பிறவாய்
யானும் அவையுமாய் இரண்டினும் வேரூய்
யாதோ பொருளாம் மாயக்கண்ணன்,
என்னிலு மறிவினிற் குறைந்தவன் போலவும்,
5. என்னைத் துணைக்கொண் டென்னுடை முயற்சியால்
என்னடை பழகலால் என்மொழி கேட்டலால்
மேம்பா டெய்த வேண்டினேன் போலவும்,
யான் சொலுங் கவிதை என்மதி யளவை
இவற்றினைப் பெருமை யிலங்கின வென்று
10. கருதுவான் போலவும், கண்ணக் கள்வன்
சீடனா வந்தென்னைச் சேர்ந்தனன், தெய்வமே !
பேதையேன் அவ்வலைப் பின்னலில் வீழ்ந்து
பட்டன தொல்லை பலபெரும் பாரதம் ;
உளத்தினை வென்றிடேன் ; உலகினை வெல்லவும்
தானகஞ் சுடாதேன் பிறர்தமைத் தானெனும்
சிறுமையி னகற்றிச் சிவத்திலே நிறுத்தவும்
தன்னுளே தெளிவும் சலிப்பிலா மகிழ்ச்சியும்
உற்றிடேன் இந்தச் சகத்திலே யுள்ள
மாந்தர்க் குற்ற துயரெலா மாற்றி
20. இன்பத் திருத்தவும் எண்ணிய பிழைக்கெனைத்
தண்டனை புரிந்திடத் தானுளங் கொண்டு
மாயக் கண்ணன் வலிந்தெனைச் சார்ந்து
புகழ்ச்சிகள் கூறியும், புலமையை வியந்தும்
பலவகை யால்அகப் பற்றுறச் செய்தான்.

KANNAN—MY CHELA ✓

"Medice, cura tieupsum." (Physician, heal thyself)

A proverb quoted in *N. T., Luke, IV, 23, Vulgate.*

Me he is and also other than me
Which is not me; yet's he of me and them;
And, from me and these is he different;
He's something mystic and mysterious,

5. The illusive Kannan. As tho' he were
To me in intellect inferior
And so with my aid, effort, company
And words of instruction, achieve he would
Greatness, the thievish Kannan, my chela
10. Became; did he think that my poetry,
Intellect and logic were with glory
Full-fraught? O God! the witless fool that I'm
To fall into his trap! O all the woes
I underwent, do form an epic great!
- 15 'Conquest of self' I have not made alas!
But 'Conquest of world' I would long for;
Burnt have I not the desires o' senses five,
But to stablish all in Sivam would I
Try, ridding them of their selves' pettiness;
20. Inly clarity I lack and also
Am without happiness that tireth not,
But sure would I dare quell the misery
Of men and keep them all in pleasance firm.
For this presumptuousness, O alas
25. He had meant sure, me to punish condign!
So it was that he came voluntary
And me praised and did extol my Muse great;
In ways various he fanned my self-love.

- வெறும் வாய் மெல்லுங் கிழவிக் கிஃதோர்
 அவலாய் முண்டது ; யானுமங் கவனை
 உயர்நிலைப் படுத்தலில் ஊக்கமிக் கவனாய்
 “இன்னது செய்திடேல், இவரொடு பழகேல்,
 இவ்வகை மொழிந்திடேல், இனையன விரும்பேல்
 30. இன்னது கற்றிடேல், இன்னநூல் கற்பாய்
 இன்னவ ருறவுகொள், இன்னவை விரும்புவாய்”
 எனப்பல தருமம் எடுத்தெடுத் தோதி
 ஓய்விலா தவனோ டுயிர்விட லானேன்.
 கதையிலே கணவன் சொல்லினுக் கெல்லாம்
 எதிர்செயும் மனைவிபோல், இவனுநான் காட்டு
 நெறியினுக் கெல்லாம் நேரெதிர் நெறியே
 நடப்பா னுயினன். நானிலத் தவர்தம்
 மதிப்பையும் புகழுறு வாழ்வையும் புகழையும்
 தெய்வமாக் கொண்ட சிறுமதி யுடையேன்
 40. கண்ணனாஞ் சீடன்யான் காட்டிய வழியெலாம்
 விலகியே நடக்கும் விநோதமிங் கன்றியும்
 உலகினர் வெறுப்புறும் ஒழுக்கமத் தனையும்
 தலையாக் கொண்டு சார்பெலாம் பழிச்சொலும்
 இகழுமிக் கவனாய், என்மனம் வருந்த
 நடந்திடல் கண்டேன் ; நாட்பட நாட்படக்
 கண்ணனுந் தனது கழிபடு நடைமில்
 மிஞ்சுவானாகி, வீதியிற் பெரியோர்
 கிழவிய ரெல்லாங் கிறுக்கனென்றிவனை
 இகழ்ச்சியோ டிரக்கமுற் றேளனம் புரியும்
 50. நிலையும் வந்திட்டான். நெஞ்சிலே யெனக்குத்
 தோன்றிய வருத்தம் சொல்லிடப் படாது.
 முத்தனாக் கிடநான் முயன்றதோ ரினானுள்
 பித்தனென் றுலகினர் பேசிய பேச்சென்
 நெஞ்சினே யறுத்தது ; நீதிகள் பலவும்
 தந்திரம் பலவும் சாத்திரம் பலவும்
 சொல்லிநான் கண்ணனைத் தொனைத்திடலாயினேன்.

- To a munching hag tho' empty-mouthe'd
30. This in sooth was a bushel o' parched rice.
Him to uplift was my life's mission sole.
" Thou shalt not do these ; thou shalt not with these
Mix ; these thou shalt not speak ; these thou shalt not
Covet ; thou shalt not read these ; these thou shalt
35. Learn ; thou shalt not these cultivate ; these thou shalt
Desire " With such righteous do's and don'ts, him
Did I ply constantly without respite.
Like the kicky-wicky of the fable
Acting contrary to her hubby's word,
40. He too acted in utter defiance
Of my instructions. The honour by men
Of world accorded, the life of renown
And glory great are by me sacred held,
Tho' I do own I am illiberal.
45. Besides his novel ways of doing things
I forbid, he with gusto took to acts
That are deemed odious by men on earth.
Obloquy and infamy heap he did
On himself everywhere ; this witnessing
50. I grieved ; day by day he in his bad ways
The more revelled ; women old and elders
Of the town deeming him a bedlamite
Fleered at him tho' with pity not unmixed.
My heart's sorrowing was beyond all words.
55. When the world at large called him a mad fool
Who was to have been into a Mukta
Wrought by me, my heart was to the quick pierced.
I dinned into Kannan maxims righteous,
Politic tales and sastras good many.

- தேவ நிலையிலே சேர்த்திடா விடினும்
 மானுடந் தவறி மடிவுரு வண்ணம்
 கண்ணனை நானும் காத்திட விரும்பித்
60. தீயெனக் கொதித்துச் சினமொழி யுரைத்தும்
 சிரித்துரை கூறியும், செள்ளென விழுந்தும்
 கேலிகள் பேசிக் கிளரியும், இன்னும்
 எத்தனை வகையிலோ என்வழிக் கவனைக்
 கொணர்ந்திட முயன்றேன், கொள்பய னென்றில்லை.
 கண்ணன் பித்தனாய்க் காட்டா ளாகி,
 எவ்வகைத் தொழிலிலும் எண்ணமற் றவனாய்
 எவ்வகைப் பயனிலுங் கருத்திழந்தவனாய்
 குரங்காய்க் கரடியாய்க் கொம்பிடைப் பிசாசாய்
 யாதோ பொருளாய், எங்ஙனோ நின்றான்.
70. இதனால்
 அகந்தையு மமதையும் ஆயிரம் புண்ணுற
 யான் கடுஞ் சினமுற்று, 'எவ்வகையானும்
 கண்ணனை நேருறக் கண்டே தீர்ப்பேன்'
 எனப் பெருந்தாப மெய்தினே னாகி
 'எவ்வா றேனும் இவனையோர் தொழிலில்
 ஓரிடந் தன்னில் ஒருவழி வலிய
 நிறுத்துவோ மாயின் நேருற் றிடுவான்'
 என்றுளத் தெண்ணி, இசைந்திடுஞ் சமயம்
 காத்திருந்திட்டேன் ; ஒரு நாட் கண்ணனைத்
80. தனியே எனது வீட்டினிற் கொண்டு
 "மகனே என்பால் வரம்பிலா நேசமும்
 அன்புநீ யுடையை ; அதனையான் நம்பி
 நின்னிட மொன்று கேட்பேன் ; நீயது
 செய்திடல் வேண்டும் ; சேர்க்கையின் படியே
 மாந்தர்தஞ் செயலெலாம் வகுப்புறல் கண்டாய்.
 சாத்திர நாட்டமும், தருக்கமும், கவிதையில்
 மெய்ப்பொரு ளாய்வதில் மிஞ்சிய விழையும்
 கொண்டோர் தமையே அருகினிற் கொண்டு
 பொருளினுக் கலையு நேரம் போக
90. மிஞ்சிய பொழுதெலாம் அவருடன் மேவி

இருந்திட லாகுமேல் எனக்குநன் றுண்டாம் ;
பொழுதெலாம் என்னுடன் போக்கிட விரும்பும்
அறிவுடை மகனிங் குணையலால் அறிந்திடேன்.
ஆதலால்

என் பயன் கருதி, எனக்கொரு துணையாய்
என்னுடன் சிலநாள் இருந்திட நின்னை
வேண்டிநிற் கின்றேன் ; வேண்டுதல் மறுத்தே
என்னை நீ துன்ப மெய்துவித் திடாமே,
இவ்வுரைக் கிணங்கு வாய் ” என்றேன். கண்ணனும்

100. “ அங்ஙனே புரிவேன். ஆயினின் னிடத்தே
தொழிலிலா தியாங்ஙனஞ் சோம்பரி லிருப்பது ?
காரிய மொன்று காட்டுவை யாயின்
இருப்பேன் ” என்றான். இவனுடை யியல்பையும்
கிறையுந் கருதி, “ என் செய்யுனை யெல்லாம்
நல்லதோர் பிரதியில் நாடொறும் எழுதிக்
கொடுத்திடுந் தொழிலினைக் கொள்ளுதி ” என்றேன்.
நன்றெனக் கூறியோர் நாழிகை யிருந்தான் ;
“ செல்வேன் ” என்றான். சினத்தொடு நானும்
பழங்கதை யெழுதிய பகுதியொன் றினையவன்

110. கையினிற் கொடுத்துக் “ கவினுற இதனை
எழுதுக ” என்றேன் ; இணங்குவான் போன்றதைக்
கையிலே கொண்டு கணப்பொழு திருந்தான் ;
“ செல்வேன் ” என்றான். சினந்தீ யாகிநான்
“ ஏதடா, சொன்ன சொல் அழித்துரைக் கின்றாய் !
பித்தரினன் றுன்னை உலகினர் சொல்வது
பிழையிலே போலும் ” என்றேன் ; அதற்கு
“ நானாவத் திங்வினை நடத்துவேன் ” என்றான்.
“ இத்தொழி லிங்கே இப்பொழு தெடுத்துச்
செய்கின் றனையா ? செய்குவ தில்லையா ?

120. “ ஒருரை சொல் என்றுறுமினேன். கண்ணனும்
“ இல்லை ” யென் றொருசொல் இமைக்குமுன் கூறினான்.
வெடுக்கெனச் சினத்தீ வெள்ளமாப் பாய்ந்திடக்
கண்சிவந் திதழ்கள் துடித்திடக் கண்ணு நாள்

Good to me; I know not any who will
With me remain constant but you, my son
Intelligent! So in my interest

95. As my succourer I do beseech thee
To be with me for a few days; turn down
Not this request and me in sorrow steep.
Say 'Yes' to what I said." Behold, "amen"
Said Kannan.

But then he said: "How could I

100. With thee remain idle? Me if you can
In some work employ, with you will I be."
I did his ability and nature
Consider and then said; "You will do well
To copy afresh my poems daily."

105. "Very well" said he and there did remain
For a few moments; then said he: "I am
Going". In anger I took out a script
Of an old story and gave it to him
Saying: "Copy this and, aye, let it be

110. Calligraphic." As if obedient
He was there for a moment and then said
"I am going."

With ire was I afire.

"Sirrah! Are you to the winds your words throwing?
I canst not blame the people that deem thee

115. Demented." Thus I, and to this he said:
"I'll be here on morrow this work to do."
"Are you or aye, aren't, you doing this work
Here and now? Say it in a word" I roared.
"No" said Kannan ere one could even wink.

120. My wrath of fire 'gan to rage like a flood;
My eyes reddened and my lips, aye, trembled;

- “ சச்சீ, பேயே, ! சிறிது போழ் தேனும்
இனியென் முகத்தி னெதிர்நின் றிடாதே ;
என்று மிவ்வுலகில் என்னிடத் தினிநீ
போந்திடல் வேண்டா, போ, போ, போ ! ” என்
றியுறச் சொன்னேன் ; கண்ணனும் எழுந்து
செல்குவ னாயினன். விழிநீர் சோர்ந்திட
130. “ மகனே போகுதி ! வாழ்க நீ ! நின்னைத்
தேவர் காத்திடுக ! நின்றனைச் செம்மை
செய்திடக் கருதி ஏதெதோ செய்தேன்.
தோற்றுவிட் டேனடா ! சூழ்ச்சிக ளழிந்தேன்.
மறித்தினி வாராய், செல்லுதி, வாழி நீ ! ”
எனத் துயர் நீங்கி அமைதியோ டிசைத்தேன் ;
சென்றான் கண்ணன். திரும்பியோர் கணத்தே
எங்கிருந் தோநல் லெழுதுகோல் கொணர்ந்தான் ;
காட்டிய பகுதியைக் கவினுற வரைந்தான்.
“ ஐயனே, நின்வழி யனைத்தையுங் கொள்வேன் ;
140. தொழில்பல புரிவேன். துன்பமிங் கென்றும்
இனிநினக் கென்னால் எய்திடா ” தெனப்பல
நல்லசொல் லுரைத்து நகைத்தனன், மறைந்தான்.
மறைந்ததோர் கண்ணன் மறுகணத் தென்றன்
நெஞ்சிலே தோன்றி நிகழ்த்துவானாயினன் :
“ மகனே ! ஒன்றை யாக்குதல் மாற்றுதல்
அழித்திட லெல்லாம் நின்செய லன்றுகாண் ;
தோற்றே னெனநீ உரைத்திடும் பொழுதிலே
வென்றாய் ; உலகினில் வேண்டிய தொழிலெல்லாம்
ஆசையுந் தாபமும் அகற்றியே புரிந்து
150. வாழ்க நீ ” என்றான். வாழ்க மற்றவனே !

- I was all fury. "Fie on you, you ghoul!
 Stand not before me e'en for a second!
 Never more should you in all your life come
125. To me; get thee gone! go, go, out you go!"
 I thundered thus. Up rose Kannan and walked
 Away; my eyes were with tears suffus'd
 "O son! Thou art going; may you flourish!
 May the immortal gods guard thee! To make
130. Thee righteous and great, aye, a hundred things
 I wrought. I failed alas! O my darling!
 Of what avail is knowledge o' strategems?
 Thou wilt not come back; aye, thou art going,
 "May you live long!" Thus I bemused, freed from
135. Sorrowing; gone was Kannan; but behold!
 He was back in a moment, with a quill
 In hand, fetched from where I know not. He did
 Beautifully write out the portion marked
 By me and said: "Sir! I will sure abide
140. By thee total, and do many a work;
 I'll no longer the cause o' your worry be."
 These and words as these — as goodly —, he spake;
 As he spake he smiled and lo, he vanished.
 Kannan who did from my presence vanish
145. Was at once found in my bosom enthroned
 Whence intuiting me he spake: "O my son!
 It is not in thy power to create
 Or change or destiny aught; when thou didst say
 'Lo, I lost', thou didst in truth, aye, triumph.
150. Do whatever work thy heart is after
 But without attachment or anguish great.
 May you flourish!" Thus did Kannan me bless.
 Aye, I hail him for ever and ever.

Introductory Remarks :

Teaching is a dismal science. Lord Halifax said : "The vanity of teaching often tempteth a man to forget he is a blockhead." The secret of education lies in respecting (loving) the pupil. A teacher who is a high-brow learns very late in his life his lesson. So a necessity arises sometimes to educate the masters.

Regimentation and rigid insistence on flawlessness may not constitute education. In the field of liberal education they may tend to become mechanical monstrosities. These thrive on pettiness. These usher in myopia.

A stern and strict teacher is more wooden than his own ferule. The teacher and the taught are to be governed by the rule of love. The rule of ferule has no room in a class room.

A teacher should embrace his disciple with a thousand hands of love. He should not fetter him with a thousand tentacles.

The aim of instruction is to help the bloom of wisdom unpetal, slowly, softly and imperceptibly. The fragrance then fills the world and wields a purificatory influence.

The relationship between the Guru and the Disciple is one of longing and belonging. The Guru must long for the Disciple and the Disciple must belong to the Guru,

Every teacher is not a Guru. "Ezhutthu Arivittavan Iraivanaakum" (He who teachers the "Akshara" is the Lord. "Akshara" is that which is deathless, as its etymology makes it plain.)

A teacher gives instructions about the letters. The Guru instils into his Disciple the spirit of letters; nay even more, the Spirit Itself.

A Guru is a Seer and a Poet of Love. He is the spiritual father of the Disciple. Manu, Agastiar, Tholkaappiar and Thiruvalluvar are Gurus. Kanakkaayars and Kanians are teachers.

Magnanimity, thy name is Guru.

Notes.

Lines 1 to 4 : Me he is ... and mysterious :

These lines contain in a nut - shell what is known as advaita, as propounded by Saiva Siddhanta. "God's relation to souls is advaita, non - duality ; this relation is understood as a synthesis of three relations, abheda or identity, bheda or difference, and bhedaabheda, a combination of these two."

Gordon Matthews.

Line 5 : The illusive Kannan :

The incomprehensible Godhead.

Lines 5 — 10 : As tho' ... Became :

God whips the ego in the most telling manner. To a person who prides in his musical talents, he appears as an abecedarian in music and vanquishes him. To a Sankara who dwells on the peak of spirituality he appears as a Chandaala to flout his spirituality which is as yet preceptorial only. To a proud teacher he appears as a mere pupil only to crucify the pride of the teacher.

Lines 10 — 13 : did he think ... his trap ! :

Cf. "... unicorns may be betray'd with trees

And bears with glasses, elephants with holes,

Lions with toils, and men with flatterers"

Julius Caesar, 2, 1, 204 — 206.

(toil — net, snare.)

Line 15 : 'Conquest of self' :

The first requisite of a Guru.

Line 16 : 'Conquest of world' :

Each one has his world of desires for the conquest of which he dies at the cannon's mouth. With him dies his bubble reputation.

Line 17 : Burnt have ... senses five :

Sensuality and spirituality are distant neighbours.

Cf. (1) "Behold the man whose firm will controlleth his five senses even as the goading hook controlleth the elephant : he is a seed fit for the fields of heaven."

Kural 24.

(2) "The Spirit only can teach. Not any sensual, not any liar, not any slave can teach." *Emerson.*

Lines 18-19 : But to ... pettiness :

Cf (1) "He who can, does. He who cannot, teaches." — *Bernard Shaw, Maxims for Revolutionists.*

(2) "Everybody who is incapable of learning has taken to teaching." — *Oscar Wilde.*

Lines 20-23 : Inly clarity pleasance firm :

Cf (1) who reads

Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgement equal or superior
(And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek)
Uncertain and unsettled still remains
Deep-versed in books and shallow in himself
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys
And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge ; "

— *Paradise Regained, IV, 322-329.*

Pleasure is not happiness. That which pleases you may not be happiness.

Pleasures will cloy. They will sooner or later pall. They are emetic.

The only ingredient of happiness is goodness.

Goodness is never tiresome. It is ever wholesome.

It is a folly to set about reforming people. "This mundane world is like a pachydermatous behemoth. It does not care to know when the tiny mosquito sitting on its back got up and left.

"To reform ourselves is what is worthy to be done. But to try to reform others is like competing with the Creator, as vain, supererogatory and ineffectual."

— *Triloka-Sitarom. Tr. Prof. K. G. Seshadri.*

Lines 24-25 : For this ... punish condign :

Pride leads to presumptuousness and presumptuousness to punishment

Lines 26-28 : So it was .. self-love :

Cf " They who delight to be flattered, pay for their folly
By a late repentance." — *Phaedrus*.

Amour propre is an abominable vice It is a deceiving mirror.

Cf " Self-love, which is the most inhibited sin in the canon " — *All's Well that Ends Well*, 1, 1, 158.

Lines 29-30 : To a ... parche'd rice :

The involuntary munching of an old woman is proverbial. In almost every house in South India, the granny sits near the threshold, the one door of which is kept ajar to allow the free flow of wind, with one leg stretched and the other tucked, munching and munching, though her mouth holds nothing to munch. She for ever runs the mill of her mouth, though empty. To her mill, the wafer-like parched rice is splendid grist.

Line 31 : Him to uplift ... mission sole :

Remember this. " Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." *Matthew*, 6, 34.

Lines 32-37 : Thou shalt ... without respite :

Is Kannan the ever-free to be fettered with petty do's and don'ts ?

Said the Prophet : " People of Orphalese, you can muffle the drum and you can loosen the strings of the lyre, but who shall command the skylark not to sing ? "

The Prophet by Gibran, p. 35.

The stream has banks ; the river also ; so too have tanks and lakes ; but the sea hath none.

The great are a law unto themselves.

Lines 38-41 : Like the kinky-wicky ... instructions :

"Hanging and wiving goes by destiny" said Shakespeare. A bachelor vexed with his single thralldom took a wife and found his life to be a double strife. He was stymied by her in every respect.

(Kinky-wicky : a ludicrous term for a wife,

Vide All's Well that Ends Well, 2, 3, 297).

Lines 41-43 : ... The honour ... sacred held :

"Distinction is the consequence, never the object, of a great mind" says Washinton Allston. Fame only proves that people are gullible. Passion for fame is no virtue. The lofty lucre of renown is nothing but a bauble. It is the "last infirmity of noble mind." A righteous soul is not beguiled by glory. When Satan tempted the Saviour, the Messiah replied thus :

"For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
The people's praise, if always praise unmixed ?
And what the people but a herd confused,
A miscellaneous rabble, who extol
Things vulgar, and well weighed, scarce worth the praise,
They praise and they admire they know not what ;
And know not whom, but as one leads the other ;
And what delight to be by such extolled,
To live upon their tongues and be their talk,
Of whom to be dispraised were no small praise ?"

Paradise Regained, II, 47 - 56.

Cf. (1) "Dreading the shade which glory casts"

From Triloka-Sitaram's the Canopy of renown.

(2) "... fold back the canopy of renown." *Ibid.*

Tr. T. N. R.

Line 44 : Tho' I do.....illiberal :

This consciousness eventually saves the teacher.

Lines 45-49 : Besides.....everywhere :

The noble have nothing to conceal. Their behaviour may shock the world. They do not live to please the world but the Spirit only.

Cf. "While the world called me demon, mocking me,
False shame I threw aside; the folk's abusive word
I took as ornament; nor did I swerve."

Thiruvachakam, Tr. G. U. Pope.

Lines 50—53 : day by day not unmixed :

Cf. "Still wandering from town; while
men cry out, 'A madman this; ' *Ibid.*

Line 54..... pity.....

All pity divorced from an honest effort aimed at relief is sheer nonsense. It is relief which the distressed seek, not pity. A person who shows, rather exhibits, pity does nothing useful. An exhibition of pity is nothing but a sop to one's conscience. A man who can offer relief, should succour. If he merely exhibits pity, he is a vile snob. The man who is not in a position to relieve distress and is yet moved by tenderness cannot be blamed. He will at least pray for the distressed, whereas the vile snob does no such thing and yet deems himself actuated by noble sentiments.

Line 54 : My heart's sorrowing ... words :

The teacher suffers from himself.

Lines 55—57 : When the world ... pierced :

It is the reformer who is to be reformed.

Lines 58—59 : I dinned ... good many :

Vast indeed is the knowledge of the teacher, but to no purpose. If the teacher were a living commentary of the righteous maxims and sastras, where is the need for his dinning them into the student? The more he dins the less will he succeed. And, what is dinsome is never wholesome.

Lines 60—61 : Tho 'he may not ... fall down' :

The standard set by the teacher is relaxed. It is a case of the donkey wasting itself into an ant.

Line 62 : Him should ... resolve :

The teacher should know :

"All things are best fulfilled in their due time,

And time there is for all things"

Paradise Regained III, 182 — 183.

Lines 63 — 67 : So it was ... all in vain :

Anger is the form assumed by desire when stymied.

Can ever wrath, cajoling, sneering etc., affect

Kannan the Lord ? The unfortunate teacher is yet to
turn towards love, which alone counts.

Line 68 : Kannan was ... a savage :

Does it lie in any one's power to tame the Lord ?

Lines 69 — 70 : No work ... interest him :

The Lord is an 'avaapta-samastha - Kaaman.' Is there
any desire for him which seeks fulfilment ? He is above likes
and dislikes.

Lines 71 — 72 : Like a monkey ... of a tree :

Who is the monkey, the bear, the ghost ? It is the teacher.
Like a monkey he indulged in a ceaseless chatter of "maxims
righteous, Politic tales and sastras good many ;" like a bear
he "raged" and "fell foul on him" (Kannan); and like a
ghost he haunted Kannan Yet he has the cheek to dispraise
Kannan in these terms.

This indeed is the way of the world.

Lines 72 — 73 : a something Unknowable ... hard to tell :

Here the teacher unconsciously uses the language of the
Upanishads.

Lines 74-75 : Wherefore ... ways :

As stated earlier, the teacher suffers from himself.

Line 75 : In wrath did I rage :

The teacher stews in his own pot.

Lines 76-77 : Surely will I ... to fulfil :

The incorrigible reformer in the teacher is oblivious of its past defeat. He will therefore once again indulge in righteous maxims, politic tales and sastras good many. He will once again rage like fire, hurl words of wrath, cajole, fall foul and sneer at. A teacher, perhaps is the slowest to learn.

Line 85 : Acts of men ... are attached :

This is the quientessential message of Saiva Sidhanta. (Aanma enpathu saarnathathan vāṇnam) The soul is what it is attached to. The soul in its fettered state is attached to Pathy (Lord) as well as Paasam (Bond) ; more to Paasam than to Pathy. It is called Sath-Asath. (Pathy is Sath ; Paasam is Asath).

Lines 86-92 : If with men ... Good to me :

We should not forget the fact that this teacher is truly a learned man. He also comes in the line of Manu. In a few words the teacher expounds the concept of asramas i.e. the four stages of the life of the individual.

“ The asrama deals with the individual in his physio-psychological development. He passes through four stages during his life-time. During the first stage, he receives education to fulfil the double task of enabling him to be assimilated into the life of the group and at the same time of receiving initiation into the art and science of unfoldment. In the second stage, he must marry, raise a family, earn a livelihood. During the third stage, the physical and mental energies show signs of ebbing away (in this type of asramic life, and he feels inclined to withdraw from active participation in the social drama ; he hovers on the fringe. During the fourth and the last stage, he withdraws completely for the leisurely assimilation of his experiences gathered during the life-time and for undistracted self-study and meditation.

Manu Dharma Sastra by Kewal Motwani, Page 9.

(Words in brackets added by the Translator for the purpose of appreciating the interpretation of Kewal Motwani, all the more.)

Lines 86 - 88 deal with the asrama of Brahmachari; line 91 deals with that of grahastha asrama; line 89 deals with the third stage, and the practice of what is longed for in line 89, marks the fourth stage.

Lines 92 - 96 : I know not ... a few days :

Knowingly or unknowingly a great truth is uttered here by the teacher. Who but the Lord for ever keeps company with a soul ?

Cf. "Hail, foot of Him Who not for an instant quits my heart !" — *Thiruvachakam, Tr. G. U. Pope.*

The teacher, also admits that Kannan's keeping company with him is for his benefit and not for Kannan's. How true !

Lines 98 - 99 : and lo, 'amen' Said Kannan :

Cf. "He grants that which the seeker seeks." — *Appar.*

Lines 99 - 101 : But then ... will I be :

The Lord asks "How can I remain idle ?" Let every soul contemplate this.

Lines 102 - 103 : I did ... Consider :

Strange it is that a mere mortal should essay to consider the ability and nature of the Lord.

Lines 103 - 104 : You will ... daily :

This is not an improper request. The Lord Siva wrote in His hand, all the poems of St. Manickkavaachakar.

Lines 105 - 107 : Very well said he ... Going :

Cf. "Yet, Ah ! He left me here." (என்னை ஈங்கு ஒழித்தருளி)
— *Keerthith - Thiru - Akaval, Tr. G. U. Pope.*

Lines 107 - 108 : In anger ... to him :

The devotee is entitled to be angry with God, for which he will no doubt suffer and yet eventually get chastened and purified.

Lines 109—110 : Saying.....Calligraphic :

Tradition has it that the Lord as Creator inscribes on the skull of each embodied soul its destiny and that the writing is illegible and therefore not decipherable. So, a demand for a legible calligraphy is but legitimate.

Lines 110—112 : As if.....Going :

Who can fetter the Lord !

Line 112 : With ire I was afire :

A frustrated man is an angry man. He seethes in his own cauldron.

Lines 113—115 : Sirrah ! Are you ... Demented :

When someone defies our understanding we deem him insane. Ay, how rational is our judgment ! We are often dissatisfied as others refuse to adjust to our unreasonableness.

Line 116 : I'll bethis work :

The Lord counsels patience. The impatient are their own foes.

Lines 117—118 : Are you.....a word : I roared.

Human impatience is proverbial. When will we ever learn to 'hasten slowly' ?

Line 119 : "No" said Kannan.....wink :

The teacher said "Say it in a word." And Kannan said it in a word, tho' it is not the word which the teacher bargained for. When you force an issue, more often than not, it will deflate yourself by blunting your tour de force.

Lines 120—126 : My wrath... out you go.....thus :

Sound and fury ! What do they signify ? Brutumfulmen.

Lines 126 127 : Up rose.....Away :

Kannan is as placid as his teacher is ruffled.

Cf. ".....on he smiles and is e'er-patient"

Kannan—My Sovereign, line 3.

Line 126 : my eyes ... tears suffuse'd:

The hour of redemption is come Love abundant wells
up from a soul contrite.

Cf " And is there bar which can e'en love restrain ?

Tear drops do betray the onset of love." Kural.

Line 128 : " O son ! ... flourish ! :

The God - bound soul carols a Mangalaa Saasanam
(Benediction).

Line 129 : May the immortal gods guard thee ! :

Cf. " The heavenly ones adore Thee still heaven's bliss
to share ! " — *Tiruvaachakum Tr G U. Pope.*

Line 131 : I failed alas ! :

Admission of failure is the beginning of wisdom. A man
lacking in courage never admits his failure.

The teacher halts on his wounded foot and this is running
in the true sense of the word.

Line 132 : Of what avail ... strategems ? :

It is now the teacher learns and is getting endowed with
real knowledge.

Lines 133—134 : Thou wilt ... live long ! :

The teacher who swore a good - bye to Kannan is aching
to welcome him. And Kannan knows that what the teacher
pronounced was not at all an irrevocable talak.

Lines 134—135 : Thus I ... Sorrowing :

The teacher was sunk into a world of woe by the weight
of his pride. Now that he is rid of his pride, he floats and
floats calmly.

Lines 135—137 : gone was Kannan ... I know not :

Where could Kannan go ? Where could He come from ?
Asked a Greek philosopher " Oh, What is God ? What is not
God ? And what is in between ? "

Cf. "That moves and that moves not ; That is far and the same is near ; That is within all this and That also is outside all this."

— *Isha Upanishad, Tr. Sri Aurobindo.*

Lines 137—138 : he did ... By me :

Is the destiny of the teacher being re-written ?

Or is it merely deciphered ? Who can tell ! ...

Lines 139-141 : "Sir ! I will .. worry be : "

Where pride failed, love succeeds.

Line 142 : These and words ... spake he :

Kannan is never tired of reciting his Gita.

Line 143 : As he spake ... he vanished :

The flame was on the bush ; purified it and left it clean and wholesome to burst into divine flowers fit for the altar of God.

Lines 144-146 : Kannan ... spake he :

Cf. "Like the soul which makes the seeing to see — in order that the soul may see, the Lord sees, and makes the soul to see. Therefore in unforgetting love the soul reaches the feet of Hara."

Sivagnānabhotham, Eleventh Sutra, Tr. Gordon Matthews.

Line 146 : O my son ! :

Hitherto the teacher called Kannan 'my son'. The position is now reversed as truth is to dawn.

Lines 147-148 : It is not ...aught :

Cf. "1. The Eternal conquered for the gods and in that victory of the Eternal the gods came to greatness. This was what they saw, "Ours is this victory, ours is this greatness."

"2 That marked this thought of theirs ; to them That became manifest. They could not discern of That, what was this mighty Daemon.

" 3. They said to Agni, " O Knower of all Births, this discern, what is this mighty Daemon ? " He said, " So be it. "

" 4. He rushed upon That ; It said to him, " Who art Thou ? " " I am Agni, " he said, " and I am the Knower of all Births. "

" 5. " Since such thou art, what is the force in thee ? " " Even all this I can burn, all this that is upon the earth. "

" 6 That set before him a blade of grass ; "This burn. " He went towards it with all his speed and he could not burn it. Even there he ceased, even thence he returned ; " I could not discern of That, what is this mighty Daemon. "

" 7. Then they said to Vayu, " O Vayu, this discern, what is this mighty Daemon " He said, " So be it "

"8. He rushed upon That ; It said to him, " Who art thou ? " " I am Vayu, " he said, "and I am he that expands in the Mother of things."

"9. Since such thou art, what is the force in thee?" "Even all this I can take for myself, all this that is upon the earth."

"10. That set before him a blade of grass ; "This take." He went towards it with all his speed and he could not take it. Even there he ceased, even thence he returned ; " I could not discern of That, what is this mighty Daemon."

"11. Then they said to Indra, "Master of plenitudes, get thou the knowledge, what is this mighty Daemon." He said, "So be it." He rushed upon That. That vanished from before him.

"12. He in the same ether came upon the Woman, even upon Her who shines out in many forms, Uma daughter of the snowy summits, To her he said, "What was this mighty Daemon."

Fourth part.

"1. She said to him, "It is the Eternal. Of the Eternal is this victory in which ye shall grow to greatness." Then alone he came to know that this was the Brahman."

Kena Upanishad, Tr. Sri Aurobindo

Lines 148—149: when thouaye, triumph :

If the teacher had persisted in blaming Kannan and not himself, his doom would have been sealed for ever.

Lines 150—152 : Do whatever.....flourish :

This is the message of the Gita.

Line 153: Aye I hail... and ever.

Let us like the teacher hail Kannan and conquer Kali through His Grace.

MESSAGE : Kenosis is to be apprehended through
Apatheia, the cathartic control of passions and
Love.

கண்ணன் — என் சற்குரு

சாத்தி ரங்கள்பல தேடினேன்—அங்கு
சங்கையில் லாதன சங்கையாம்—பழங்
கோத்தி ரங்கள்சொல்லு மூடர்தம்—பொய்மைக்
கூடையி லுண்மை கிடைக்குமோ? — நெஞ்சில்
மாத்திர மெந்த வகையிலும்—சக
மாய முணர்ந்திடல் வேண்டுமே—என்னும்
ஆத்திர நின்ற திதனிடை—நித்தம்
ஆயிரந் தொல்லைகள் சூழ்ந்தன

நாடுமுழுதிலுஞ் சுற்றிநான்—பல
நாட்களலைந்திடும் போதினில்,—நிறைந்
தோடும் யமுனைக் கரையிலே—தடி
ஊன்றிச் சென்றாரோர் கிழவனார் ;—ஒளி
கூடு முகமுந் தெளிவுதான்—குடி
கொண்ட விழியுஞ் சடைகளும்—வெள்ளைத்
தாடியுங் கண்டு வணங்கியே—பல
சங்கதி பேசி வருகையில்

என்னுளத் தாசையறிந்தவர்—மிக
இன்புற் றுரைத்திட லாயினர்—“தம்பி,
நின்னுளத் திற்குத் தகுந்தவன்,—சுடர்
நித்திய மோனத் திருப்பவன்,—உயர்
மன்னர் குலத்திற் பிறந்தவன்,—வட
மாமது ரைப்பதி யாள்கின்றான் ;—கண்ணன்
தன்னைச் சரணென்று போவையால்,—அவன்
சத்தியங் கூறுவன்” என்றனர்.

மாமது ரைப்பதி சென்றுநான்—அங்கு
வாழ்கின்ற கண்ணனைப் போற்றியே ;—என்றன்
நாமமு மருங் கருத்துமே—சொல்லி
நன்மை தருகென வேண்டினன் ;—அவன்
காமனைப் போன்ற வடிவமும்—இளங்
காளையர் நட்பும் பழக்கமும்—கெட்ட
பூமியைக் காக்குந் தொழிலிலே—எந்தப்
போதுஞ் செலுத்திடுஞ் சிந்தையும்,

KANNAN—MY SAD-GURU

*" Dare not condemn the greatness of the grace
Of the superne Guru, th' most precious One !
The Infinite that deigned to walk the earth "*

-Manickavaachakar.

A good many Sastras I sought after
But lo ! they are with endless doubts replete ;
Will e'er truth lie hid in the false basket
Of fools who 'bout gotras ancient blabber ?
My heart ached for knowledge true of Maaya 5
Universal ; this I should sure come by,
Aye come by ; such was my longing great
Whilst a thousand cares daily me besieged.
My quest pursuing I roamed many days
The whole country and came to th' sacred banks 10
Of the Jumna where I beheld a man
Ripe with age walking with th' aid of a stick.
Bright was his face ; his eyes were an abode
Of clarity ; his locks were all matte'd.
And milk-white was his beard ; unto him 15
Obeisance I paid and conversed for long.
My longing did he scent and was well-pleased.
Quoth he : " O my young brother, the person
Your yearning heart is after's to me known.
He's the One o' lustrous Silence eternal ; 20
He's the Sovereign of Vada Mathura
He hails from a great dynasty noble
Go seek refuge in him yclept Kannan
He will sure to you the great truth unfold.
To Mathura great did I soon repair 25
And called on Kannan, and him hailed full-well ;
To him I revealed my name, town and aim
And humbly sought I his benediction
In beauty he was a Manmath ; he kept
Company with friends who were lads bull-like. 30
His mind was for ever pre-occupied
With the thought of reigning this madding world

- ஆடலும் பாடலும் கண்டுநான்—‘முன்னர்
ஆற்றங் கரையினிற் கண்டதோர்—முனி
வேடந் தரித்த கிழவரைக்—கொல்ல 35
வேண்டு’ மென் றுள்ளத்தி லெண்ணினேன்—‘சிறு
நாடு புரந்திடு மன்னவன்—கண்ணன்
நாளுங் கவலையில் முழுகினேன் ;—தவப்
பாடுபட் டோர்க்கும் விளங்கிடா—உண்மை
பார்த்திவ னெங்ஙனங் கூறுவான்?’ 40
- என்று கருதியிருந்திட்டேன் ;—பின்னர்
என்னைத் தனியிடங் கொண்டுபோய்,—‘நினை
நன்று மருவுக ! மைந்தனே !—பர
ஞான முரைத்திடக் கேட்பை நீ ;—நெஞ்சில்
ஒன்றுங் கவலையில் லாமலே—சிந்தை 45
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- சந்திரன் சோதி யுடையதாம் ;—அது
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மந்திரத் தாலிவ் வுலகெலாம்—வந்த
மாயக் களிப்பெருங் கூத்துக்காண் ;—இதைச்
சந்ததம் பொய்யென் றுரைத்திடும்—மடச் 55
சாத்திரம் பொய்யென்று தள்ளடா.
- ‘ஆதித் தனிப்பொரு ளாகுமோர்—கடல்
ஆருங் குமிழி உயிர்களாம் ;—அந்தச்
சோதி யறிவென்னு ஞாயிறு—தன்னைச்
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நேர்மைத் தொழிலி லியங்குவார்.

And with singing, dancing, and junketing.
 This seeing, o'ercome was I by a thought
 To slay the pseudo - saint I late met. 35
 "A petty ruler of a small country!
 This Kaunan is for ever in worries
 Deep immersed; how can he, such as he is
 Ever come to know of aught of truth that is
 Unknown aye, even to tapaswis great?" 40
 Thus did I muse in sooth; then did Kannan
 Me to a place of strict secrecy take
 And said: "O my son, Gnothi Seauton;
 Listen; I'm expounding wisdom divine;
 With your heart cleansed of sorrows, with chinta 45
 Unwavering in joy planted, conquer
 Self; but consciousness of conquest should not
 Linger; then wisdom scales heaven itself.
 Its lustre is Chandra's; sempiternal
 Is it which is Truth e'er-during; when you 50
 This invoke, lo, down doth it descend sure
 And hold you in its embrace and grace grants;
 'Tis by this mantra mighty all these worlds
 Are, and act as a grand play of Maaya
 Fie on that sastra—the utterly false, 55
 Which for ever tries this to falsify.
 The one original Being's the ocean
 And lives are but its bubbles; That Lustre
 Of Wisdom is the sun; th' rays emitte'd
 Are indeed lives; the rest of things whate'er, 60
 Be it known, are but the colours that do
 From that Being emanate; they that know
 This Law of Hues are with bliss, aye, blesse'd;
 'Tis they, in work righteous, engage themselves.

- “சித்தத்தி லேசிவ நாடுவார்,—இங்கு
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"They that in their Chittha do Siva seek 69
 Are here very happy and reign the world ;
 Like the mammoth magnanimous, they walk
 The earth in godly strides of blissful pride ;
 Daily happenings all, they know to be
 The outcome of our Father's grace of yore ; 70
 Everything 's with pleasance, well-being and bliss
 Tinct; so they are by worries never touched.

"It is lustre that their wisdom informs,
 It is shrewdness that their intellect informs,
 Nev'r do they from righteousness deviate, 75
 In worldly work they are ever engaged,
 They take to art, master economics,
 They relieve their worries and those o' others,
 They joy in the 'witching presence of dames
 Whose eyes do burgeon sweet with bubbling joy 80

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 Dance and song, painting, poetry and arts
 Such as these; they thus live a fulsome life ;
 The meanness of men endure, they cannot. 85
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 Are for them well-fulfilled; these may I say
 Choose th' bushes of a jungle to dwell in ;
 Behold, that very jungle is God's Eden.

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Introductory Remarks :

The word Guru means "Remover of Darkness". Darkness is what Saiva Siddhanta calls "Aanava Malam". It is the impurity 'born together' with the soul, Aanava Malam is the principle of soul's individuation, the term being formed from anu, atom, atomic smallness and malam which is impurity. Aanava Malam is not to be confused with Ahankaaram which is I-ness, also known at times as Aankaaram which is egoism.

Darkness is called Avidya (Nescience.) Without the help of the Guru this is not to be removed. The Guru is God Himself. To one who is fettered by the triple mala (Aanavam, Mayei and Kanmam) the Guru appears at the right hour in the form of a human being. Because of the Lord's descent in a human form He is not the less God. This is a fundamental lesson to be remembered for ever.

Since such infinite respect is due to a Guru, the situation lends itself to exploitation. Pseudo-Gurus mushroom in the world from time to time. Thirumoolar says it is the duty of the king to detect these and punish them condignly.

Ozhuvil Odukkam, a treatise which reconciles. Sankara-Adwaitam with Saiva Siddhantam tells us to beware the false guru. Baghavan Sri Ramakrishna also admonishes us in the same vein.

Vivekananda had his initial doubts about the Paramahansa. Having tried him in all possible ways he grappled his guru with hooks of steel eventually.

Cucullus non facit monachum. (The cowl does not make the monk.) Gilded tombs do worms infold. Saffron robe, matted locks, holy ashes are to be respected. Yet these alone confer not guruship on any one.

Only that soul which gets guidance from the Lord, can distinguish between the chaff and the grain. But aye, there is the rub. If the Lord chooses to beguile, even so great a person as Sundarar who was with the Lord, acting as His Bearer of Holy Ashes, will be hoodwinked. A soul clarified by His grace eternally depending upon His will alone appears to be exempt from downfall.

Saivism declares that it is not for us to judge whether one is true or pseudo. If one wears the symbols of Saivism, one ought to be adored. Meipporul Naayanaar thought that the garb was all. To him, so it was. Most of us are not fit to be the dust on the sandals of Meipporul Naayanaar. Yet the channel of mercy which runs to irrigate the fields (of evolved souls), here and there oozes and feeds the tares and grass and weeds too.

Notes

Lines 1—2: A good many replete :

Cf. "Sastras are a mixture of sand and sugar."

Baghawan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

See also notes on line 70, Kannan—My Mother.

Cf. "..... he laughs

At your sastras false and thaumaturgic".

Kannan - My father, 31, - 32.

The secondary meaning of lines 1 and 2 is that the Sastras bristle with doubts. What are really free from doubt are made dubious by the Sastras.

Lines 3-4: Will e'er blabber ?

A knowledge of gotras and their significance is not within the fool's ken of comprehension. His presumptuous talk about gotras is mere balderdash. His thought, word and deed indeed are a basket of falsehoods.

Gotra : It is named after one of the ancient sages who is either a descendant of or himself one of the eight accredited progenitors of the human race namely, Agastya, Bharadwaja, Gautama, Jamadagni, Kasyapa, Vashista and Viswamitra. Every twice-born (Brahmin) or person belonging to the first three orders owns one of these rishis as the original founder of his family.

Lines 5—6: Maaya Universal. It is called 'Jaga Mayei' by Arunagiri Naathar. (Bharati was very much attached to this saint. He has translated some of his hymns.)

Lines 7-8 : Such was ... besieged :

Cf. "Between the idea
And the reality
Between the motion
And the act
Falls the Shadow"

— T. S. Eliot.

Bharati the chela wants to come by a thorough knowledge of 'Jaga Mayei' which lies, according to Swami Vivekananda, beyond the pale of logic. Das Hammarskjöld was hunting after something akin to this, for he says :

"What I ask for is unreasonable : that life shall have a meaning.

"What I strive for is impossible : that my life shall acquire a menaing.

"I dare not believe, I do not see how I shall ever be able to believe : that I am not alone."

Line 9 : My quest pursuing many days :

Cf. 'Between the desire
And the spasm
Between the potency
And the existence
Between the essence
And the descent
Falls the Shadow"

— T. S. Eliot.

Line 1 : the Jumna :

The Jumna is the locale of juvenile Kannan's escapades Mother Aandal hails him as 'The Lord of the pure Jumna with spacious fords.'

"Look, Lolita, the stream one loves so
And water brings each day !

But what is this strange light that moves so,
In Jamouna to-day ?"

— Horu Thakur. Tr. Sri Aurobindo.

Lines 11-15 : a man his beard :

The lines (in the original) constitute a perfect penpicture of a sage. When one meets such a venerable person, one bows, nolens volens.

Line 17 : My longing well-pleased :

The great are endowed with a third eye ; nothing escapes their vision.

Line 20 : the one Silence eternal :

This is the Silence that passeth understanding. This is the SUMMAA of the Siddha - Purushas. This Summaa is the very summation of spirituality. It is in this Silence, all truths unite and as Sri Aurobindo says :

“ And all ideas rejoin Reality.
There knowing herself by her own termless self,
Wisdom supernal, wordless, absolute
Sat unaccompanied in the eternal calm
All - seeing, motionless, sovereign and alone.”

Line 9 : In beauty a Manmath

The beauty of Kannan is ineffable. Asks Vidyapati :

“ How shall I tell of Caanou's beauty bright ?”

— Tr. Sri Aurobindo

Horu Thakur says :

“ I know him by his dark compelling beauty ”

— Tr. Sri Aurobindo

Line 32 : reigning this madding world :

Cf. (1) “ There is not for me, O Partha (Arjuna), any work in the three worlds which has to be done nor anything to be obtained which has not been obtained ; yet I am engaged in work.”

— The Bhagavadgita, III, 22, Tr. Radhakrishnan

(2) “In the name of my lordship, I slave for the whole world.”

— Mahabharata, Tr. Radhakrishnan.

Line 33 : singing, dancing and junketing :

In the words of T. S. Eliot, Kannan appeared to Bharati “Distracted from distraction by distraction, Filled with fancies and empty of meaning.”

Lines 34-35 : This seeing..... I lately met :

Cf. “Mind in its frenzy creates Frankenstein”

Dr. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar.

Lines 36-40: "A petty.....tapaswis great?"

It is only by the grace of the great, we can comprehend the great. Lacking this grace, one will be rocked by a giant scepticism and one will consider the acts of the great to be nothing but misty mysticism and maddening moonshine.

Line 43 : Gnothi Seauton :

The two words Gnothi Seauton (know thyself) mark the peak of Sankara-Advaita. Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan says :

"The Philosophy of Sri Ramana—which is the same as that of Advaita-Vedanta, has for its aim Self-realisation. The central path taught in this philosophy is the inquiry into the nature of Self, the content of the notion 'I'. Ordinarily the sphere of the 'I' varies and covers a multiplicity of factors. But these factors are not really the 'I'. For instance, we speak of the physical body as 'I'; we say, 'I am fat,' 'I am lean', etc. It will not take long to discover that this is a wrong usage. The body itself cannot say 'I' for it is inert. Even the most ignorant man understands the implication of the expression 'my body'. It is not easy, however, to resolve the mistaken identity of the 'I' with egoity (ahankara). That is because the inquiring mind is the ego, and in order to remove the wrong identification it has to pass a sentence of death, as it were, on itself. That is by no means a simple thing. The offering of the ego in the fire of wisdom is the greatest form of sacrifice." Ramana Maharshi and His Philosophy of Existence, Introduction, pp 20 and 21.

Grant Duff, in his Preface to 'Truth Revealed' (Sadvidya) says :

"Finally, in verse forty, the whole fabric of form and formlessness is hurled to the ground and utterly destroyed with the statement that such thoughts are due to the empirical ego. Once we have divested ourselves of this false notion, that is the end of our troubles : Salvation has been found. "Therefore, realize yourself."

"Such is the Message of the Maharshi and such is Reality, and such are we all, as soon as we know. But the

word 'knowledge' is deceptive as used among us in the West and often denotes mere lip-service without any realization, or at best imperfect realization. Once the path is found it must be followed to the end which is also the middle and the beginning."

Lines 45—48 : With your heaven itself :

Bharati was a Siddha-Purusha. He had himself declared this.

" There were Siddhas before me in this land,
I too am one in their (unbroken) line."
He was therefore familiar with Yoga.

Lines 45—48 deal with the state, called by Saiva Siddhanta, "Ninmalaavattai". This is also known as Kaariya Sutthaavattai".

When the soul abides in the grace of Siva, unaffected by the states of Kevala and Sakala, it is said to be in Ninmalaavattai. This comprises five states : Ninmala Jaagra, Ninmala Swapna, Ninmala Suzhutthi, Ninmala Turiyam and Ninmala Turiyaatheetam.

To know oneself by grace, is Ninmala Jaagra.

Having known oneself by grace to remain irrevocably oned in grace and to ever envision it (without indulging in any other act pertaining to 'thought word and deed') is Ninmala Swapna.

When the soul shorn of its icchai, gnaanam and kreyei (will, consciousness and deed) becomes the very grace in which it is soused, it is in Ninmala Suzhutthi.

Ninmala Turiyam is that which reveals unto the soul (freed even from vaasana-mala) Sukha-Prabha (the light of bliss).

Having received bliss, the soul that is even unconscious of such reception becomes in that transcendental state the very form of bliss. This indeed is Ninmala Turiyaatheetam.

Lines 46—47 : Conquer Self :

This was the one aim of Bharati, which he never lost sight of. He constantly prayed to God to grant him mastery over his self.

Cf. "O Manakkula Vinaayaka ! Great Lord
Of Heavenly Scriptures ! Grant me the skill
To rule myself ; if I come by the power
To govern myself, all shall stand fulfilled",
The Garland Wrought of Fourfold Gems
On Vinaayaka. Tr. T. N. R.

Line 48 : Then wisdom itself:

Cf. "A cosmic Thought spreads out its vastitudes ;
Its smallest parts are here philosophies
Challenging with their detailed immensity,
Each figuring an omniscient scheme of things".
Sri Aurobindo, Savitri.

Line 49 : Its lustre is Chandra's :

This indeed is "the lustre of infinity". It is in this
"immense intuitive Ray" the liberated soul bathes for ever.
This Chandra is the abode of "eternal suns" and "oceans of
an immortal luminousness".

Line 50 : Truth e'er-during :

Cf. "The Truth supreme, vast and impersonal
... ..
Its substance a pure gold ever the same"
Sri Aurobindo, Savitri.

Lines 51-52 : down doth it grace grants :

This indeed is Satthinipata.

Lines 57-58 : The one bubbles :

Bharati echoes here the famous concept of Sankara who
in his Atma-Bodha says :

"That Brahman is the warp and woof of all"

"As bubbles rise and dissolve

In and out of water

The worlds thrive and disappear

In the sustaining warp and woof."

Tr. Dr. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar.

Lines 57-63 : The one emanate :

This passage contains the quintessential message of
Advaita according to Sankara.

Cf. "The animal is Man disguised in a hairy skin and upon four legs; the worm is Man writhing and crawling towards the evolution of his Manhood. Even crude forms of Matter are Man in his inchoate body. All things are Man, the Purusha"

Sri Aurobindo, Thoughts and Glimpses.

Lines 60-63 : the rest blessed :

Cf. "The One remains, the many change and pass ;
Heaven's light for ever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a Dome of Many - Coloured Glass
Stains the white radiance of Eternity"

Shelley, Adonais.

Bharati's 'Law of Hues' is a wonderful law. It is a perpetual pointer towards unity.

Cf. "What tho' their hues be, all are they equal;
Is one hue great and another not so?"

The Drum. Tr. T. N. R.

Line 63 : They :

These are the Jeevan-Muktas, the liberated while yet alive.

Lines 65-72 : They never touched:

Cf. (1) "Omniscient tho' they truly are, they will
Know of nothing but Bliss and Grace of God."
St. Umapathy's Tiruvarutpayan, Tr. T. N. R.

(2) "It is divinity that they behold
Within and Without; so they despise nought" *Ibid.*

Lines 69-72 : The outcome———never touched :

Cf. "The Jivan-Mukta has his being in Pathy. He is just a puppet and the puppeteer is Pathy. Through His puppet the Lord plays a divine game. Whatever the Jivan-Mukta does, cannot bind him. His acts are like fried seeds. They cannot germinate. He is endowed with endless felicity. He companies with the devotees. To him the insignia of Saivism are Siva Himself. He travels on life's common way in cheerful godliness. To his felicity there is no end."

An Outline Of Saiva Siddhanta by T. N. R.

Line 75 : Nev'r do they — — deviate :

Some of their acts may appear to be deviations. But they are not indeed so. So it is St. Umapathy says :

"Even if heinous sins are committed,
Even if man-slaughter and larceny
And liquor-bibing are perpetrated,
Even if paths unrighteous are trodden
Even if caste-rules, aye, are cast away
Even if blunders are wrought ; if one be
Deedless and if one is oned with THAT, the Lord
Will 'habit one's body and it owning
As His, will Himself eat, slumber, walk forth
And perform all types of acts, abolishing
All difference and thus make that one, none
But Himself ; thus is transmutation wrought.
This is Siva-Bhoga immatchable."

The Light of Righteous Way, Tr. T. N. R.

Lines 76—83: In worldly.....falsome life :

Cf. (1) "The realised soul, the Jivan-Mukta, the Sthita-prajna, the Bhodisattwa, can be in the world without being a slave of it ; and he could pursue art and science, and participate in the work of a technological society, without being tainted by materialist values."

Preface to Atma-Bodha, Dr. K. R S. Iyengar

(2) "Exceeding the organs of sense,
My Self is uninvolved in the sensual play."

Atma-Bhoda, Tr Dr. K. R. S. Iyengar.

(3) " Although apparently consorting
With the world's limitations
The realised Self is truly unattached
And, like the wind, is seraphically free. " *Ibid.*

Lines 76-83 : In wordly ... God's Eden :

Cf. (1) " Acts of will engender embodiment,
Divinely prompted deeds enlightenment."

Thiruvartupayan, Tr. T. N. R.

(2) " The threefold Karma affect not the wise freed ;
To them here and hereafter are the same. " *Ibid.*

(3) " Waves of mercy will waft from them when they
The misery of the deceitful behold. " *Ibid.*

Lines 86-88 : these may God's Eden :

This passage contains a sublimated version of Milton's thought which is as follows :

" The mind is its own place and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven. "

Paradise Lost, I, 253-254

The liberated have comprehended "divinity in all its disguises" and they carry that divinity with them ; nay they contain that divinity.

Cf. " Ayodhya is, where Rama dwells. " *A Tamil adage.*
The freed are called by Thirumoolar "mobile temples."

Line 89 : Wisdom :

This is GNOSIS or divine wisdom. This is called Pathy-Gnaanam in Saiva Siddhanta.

" In him (Bharati) we have a confluence of poesy and wisdom." *Bharati-The Divine Poet, Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan.*

Lines 89-90 : I have ... soon attain :

Kannan the Guru, like Sankara says :

" Seated in a solitary place,
Self-absorbed and self-controlled
Passionless and single-minded,
Do thou meditate on the boundless Self. "

Atma-Bodha, Tr. Dr. K. R. S. Iyengar.

Lines 92-96 : I was ... of ours :

Cf. (1) " The ocean of delusion crossed,
The monsters of hate and infatuation destroyed
The Yogi, now a self-illuminated ecstatic
Is crowned in the peace of the Self "

Atma-Bhoda, Tr. Dr. K. R. S. Iyengar.

(2) " The Self blazes self-luminous like gold " *Ibid.*

Line 96 : play :

This is a meaningful play ; but the meaning is beyond the ken of human comprehension.

This is referred to as 'gambol endless', by Kamban.

The wise call this 'the riddle of the world.' "Man's:

whole aim is to discover his role in this play and act it well. "

Triloka-Sitaram.

(8)

கிருஷ்ணஞ்சலி ।

காயிலே புளிப்ப தென்னே ? கண்ண பெருமானே ! — நீ
கனியிலே இனிப்ப தென்னே ? கண்ண பெருமானே !
நோயிலே படுப்ப தென்னே ? கண்ண பெருமானே ! — நீ
நோன்பிலே உயிர்ப்ப தென்னே ? கண்ண பெருமானே !

5. காற்றிலே குளிர்த்த தென்னே ? கண்ண பெருமானே ! — நீ
கனலிலே சுடுவ தென்னே ? கண்ண பெருமானே !
சேற்றிலே குழம்ப லென்னே ? கண்ண பெருமானே ! — நீ
திக்கிலே தெளிந்த தென்னே ? கண்ண பெருமானே !
ஏற்றிநின்னைத் தொழுவ தென்னே ? கண்ண பெருமானே !

- நீ
10. எளியர் தம்மைக் காப்ப தென்னே ? கண்ண பெருமானே !
போற்றினோரைக் காப்ப தென்னே ? கண்ண பெருமானே !
— நீ
பொய்யர் தம்மை மாய்ப்ப தென்னே ? கண்ண பெருமானே !
போற்றி ! போற்றி ! போற்றி ! போற்றி ! கண்ண
பெருமானே ! — நின்
பொன்னடிகள் போற்றி நின்றேன், கண்ண பெருமானே !

Introductory Remarks

Contraries play a vital role in human life. The fettered soul is guna-ridden. God is above gunas. His swarupa-lakshana is SAT-CHIT-ANANDA (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss). All contraries and 'pairs of opposites' get sublated in in Godhead. The Lord is therefore hailed as One who is above 'likes' and 'dislikes', by Thiruvalluvar.

The descriptions of the Lord by the Vedas, Upanishads and seers stun us, for they are all replete with ideas which are patently contraries. The Isa Upanishad says :

“That moves and That moves not; That is far and the same is near; That is within all this and That also is outside all this.”

(Tr. Sri Aurobindo)

KRISHNANJALI I

"O, What is God; what is not God and what is in between?"

Why is it you are sour in the green fruit
And sweet in the ripe fruit? O Lord Kanna!
Why's it you are in illness bed - ridden
And vivified in rites? O Lord Kanna!

5. How is it you are the coolth of zephyr
And the heat of flame bright? O Lord Kanna!
How is it you are boggy in quagmire
And lucid in directions? Lord Kanna!
Why is it you are for ever adored

10. And why succour you the lowly? Lord Kanna!
Why is it you save them that adore you
And kill them that are false? O Lord Kanna!
I hail you, I hail you, O Lord Kanna!
Your golden feet I hail, O Lord Kanna!

St. Maanickavaachakar says :

"Thou'rt afar, art near" (Tr. G. U. Pope)

So it is, the mind uninformed by clarity is dazed.

So long as we call to our aid the mind or the ego, (to quote a Tamil saying), we will be like him who is counting on a mud-horse to cross a river. Divinity is not amenable to discussion

The thinking apparatus has its own limitations. Beyond a certain stage, thinking is of no avail. There were great thinkers among the fallen angels. Of them Milton says :

*"Others apart sat on a hill retired,
In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate—
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost."*

Questioning, discussing, meditating are aids to an extent. As Dr. K. R. S. Iyengar says: "Yet within limits analysis has its uses too. Only the need for humility is endless." To come by 'beyonding', what is required is 'Surrender'. "Let us hail His feet" (சுழல் போற்றுகும்) say St. Thirugnaana Sambhandar. That is what which counts.

In this poem, we find Bharati the questioner beautifully winding up as the wise one who unquestioningly hails the Lord.

Notes

Lines 1-2: What was sour, has become sweet by the grace of Kannan.

The green fruit is that of the forbidden tree. The ripe fruit is "Thiru-Arul-Payan". St. Appar calls this "Sivakkani".

Lines 2-4: Kannan who is Naaraayana is the spiritual doctor.

Cf. "Vaidhyo Naaraayana Hari :"

Lines 5-6: In Kannan, coolth and heat co-exist.

Cf. "Lucent light and darkness dense abide not
In the same place; how then great Sambhanda
Of Maruthur belted by leafy groves lofty!
Didst Thou abide in me, the murky one?"

St. Umapathy's *Vina Venba*, Tr. T. N. R.

Lines 7-8:

Cf. "For one the dew, the hare-bell and the song;
For one the mire, the hurry and the thong."

Amory Hare, Life.

"The quagmire" is the limiting finitization. Divinity is infinite, infinite as the space; infinite as the directions which are symbolic of space. In Kuyil Paattu, Bharati describes the directions as "boundless and not to be over-taken".

Line 9: If literally rendered, this line will mean: "Wherefore are you adored? O Lord Kanna!"

Line 10: the lowly:

These are the meek. And blessed are the meek.

Lines 11-12:

These two lines are likely to land the unwary reader into a melbowne of misunderstanding and misinterpretation.

God is impartial. If we suffer, it is on account of ourselves. "None else compels" says the Buddha. "Good or bad comes, not from others" says Puranaanooru.

Cf. "He is good to the devout, and not good
Unto the undevout; likes or dislikes
He has none; for Sankara is His name."

St. Umapathy's Thiruvavutayan, Tr. T. N. R.

This distich of St. Umapathy is based upon a hymn of St. Appar.

Lines 13-14:

Cf. "Sacred objects are for recognition and not for cognition; for acceptance and not for approval; for veneration and not for evaluation."

Dr. Attar Singh.

THE MESSAGE

"The sun is luminous, water is cool
And fire is warm;
So too the Atman is blemishless-
Existence-Consciousness-Bliss."

Atma-Bodha, Tr. Dr. K. R. S. Iyengar.

"Thujl Chey Chomolungma"



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சீவலெல்லாம் லெக்டுமி சீவல் ஆகுமா ?

Vinay Avasthi Santhi Bhuvan Vani Trust Donations

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இந்நாளில், முத்துக்களைப் பொறுக்கி எடுப்பதுபோல்
பாக்குகளைத் தெரிந்தெடுத்து கத்தமான முறையில்
சீவி சீவலாக்கி, அதன் இயற்கை மனத்தோடும், சுபாவ
குணத்தோடும், நாங்கள் சகாய விலைக்கு அளிக்கின்றோம்.
ஆகவே எங்கும் லெக்டுமி சீவலுக்கு, உவகையோடு கூடிய
உன்னத ஆதரவு.



முதலா விற்பனையாளர்கள் :
லெக்டுமி ஏஜென்ஸிஸ்,
லெக்டுமி நகர்,
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